Marxism Today

October 83 75p

Eric Hobsbawm — on Labour —
Interview with Chinese Detective

Labour in peril— it's a job for Superman

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

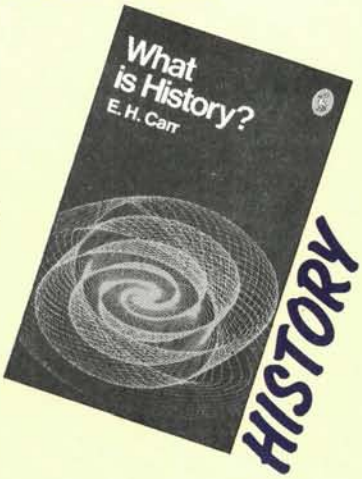
Collet's

Penguin Bookshop
52 Charing Cross Road London WC2H 0BB
Telephone 01-836 2315
Hours of business Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm

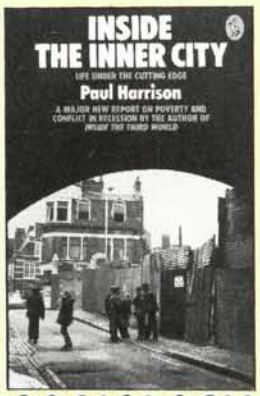
Penguin for Students

LITERATURE

plus
Pelican
Marx Library

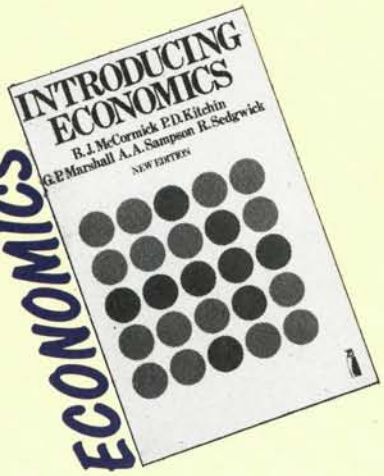


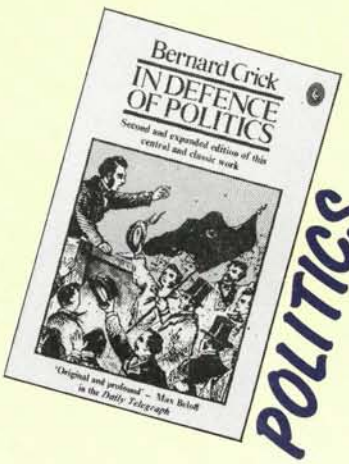
HISTORY



SOCIOLOGY

ECONOMICS




Bernard Crick
IN DEFENCE OF POLITICS
Second and expanded edition of this central and classic work
"Original and profound" – Max Beloff in the Daily Telegraph

POLITICS

Pelican Guides to English Literature
Plus large second-hand section

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marxism Today

Theoretical and discussion journal of the Communist Party

EDITORIAL OFFICE
16 St John Street, London EC1M 4AY
Telephone 01-251 4406

EDITOR Martin Jacques

EDITORIAL OFFICE Sally Davison

EDITORIAL BOARD
Irene Brennan, Dan Connor, John Foster, Jean Gardiner, Eric Hobsbawm, John Hoffman, Alan Hunt, Arnold Kettle, Betty Matthews, Bert Pearce, Dave Priscott, Bob Rowthorn, Mike Seifert.

FOCUS Paul Webster

CHANNEL FIVE Sally Townsend

REVIEWS Sally Davison

VIEWPOINT John Kelly

UPDATE Maria Loftus

ADVERTISING Abdul Kassim

CIRCULATION Kevin Berry

DISTRIBUTION
Newsagents: Punch Distribution Services 23-27 Tudor Street, London EC4Y 0HR
Subscriptions and bookshops:
Central Books Ltd, 14 The Leathermarket London SE1 3ER

SUBSCRIPTION RATES for one year
Inland: individuals £9, students £7, institutions £12
Overseas: individuals £12, institutions £15

The editor welcomes contributions for publication in the journal. Further details if required from the editorial office. Please send SAE if you want an acknowledgement or manuscript returned.
The views expressed by authors are personal and not necessarily those of the editor or editorial board.

DESIGN Lee Robinson and Katherine Gutkind

TYPESET by Verbatim Graphics Ltd

PRINTED by Farleigh Press Ltd (TU) Watford, Herts

COVER DESIGN: Peter Hammarling, Kathryn Tattersall, Lee Robinson

COVER ILLUSTRATION: Brett Ewins

Published by the Communist Party
16 St John Street, London EC1M 4AY
© World Copyright October 1983 Marxism Today

OCTOBER · 1983 VOLUME 27 NUMBER 10

2 FOCUS

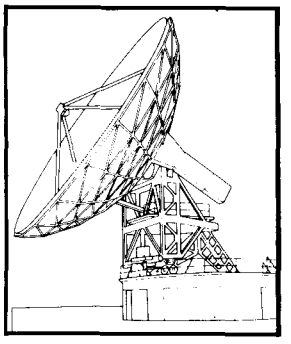
Crime Prevention · Polish economic reform · Equal pay

FEATURES

1 Labour's Lost Millions · Eric Hobsbawm
Labour was trounced in June. It could be marginalised over the next decade — or sooner. So what do we do about it?

14 Feminism is Dead? Long Live Feminism · Tricia Davis
The Tories have a far more subtle position on women than is generally recognised. They have been forced to acknowledge the strength of feminism. So why is the Left retreating from it?

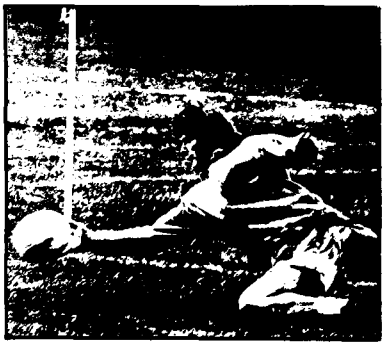
19 Interview with David Yip, the Chinese Detective
David Yip, the star of *The Chinese Detective*, looks at the series and the problems confronting the ethnic minorities on the screen and in society.



24 The Popular Front Revisited · Dave Priscott
The Left has underestimated the strength and threat of Thatcherism. The experience of the 30s serves as both a warning and a guide.

32 Privatising Pleasure — the Communications Revolution · Peter Golding and Graham Murdock
A revolution is being wrought in the communications industries, yet the Left is hardly aware of its existence, let alone what to do about it.

38 CHANNEL FIVE
Interview with Keith Waterhouse
Political Theatre — David Edgar
Televised Football — David Berry and Steve Pinder
Spotlight: No Go Music — Chris Bohn



47 REVIEWS
Richard Saville — *The Cambridge Economic History of India: Civilisation and Capitalism*
Michael Rustin — *What is to be Done about the Family?*

51 LETTERS

52 UPDATE

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CRIME PREVENTION

The Tory government's dominance in the debate relating to crime, policing and other aspects of 'law and order' is to be consolidated in the next few months as a far-reaching crime prevention campaign gets under way. The philosophy behind this campaign is spelt out in a draft document currently being circulated by the Home Office and, significantly, to be issued *jointly* with the Departments of the Environment, Health and Social Security, Education and Science, and the Welsh Office (*Home Office Draft Circular on Crime Prevention*, issued July 1983).

Apart from chief officers in the police and probation services, the views of housing, education and social service chief officers, as well as local government chief executives, are also being sought. The Home Office, which intends to publish a circular this autumn, states that 'given the complex nature of crime it is suggested that agencies beyond the police, whose policies and practices may well influence the incidence of crime in our communities have a contribution to make in developing local preventive strategies' (July 1983).

This 'multi-agency' approach is seen to operate on a number of levels. On the physical level, management and 'manipulation' of the environment is emphasised to reduce the opportunity for many of the most common crimes — vandalism, burglary, theft. Such management ranges from the design of estates to bolts and bars on buildings, improved street lighting, better doors, entryphones and caretakers in blocks of flats.

These suggestions are hardly new. The DoE in its Priority Estates Programme has already recognised the need for resources for such measures to prevent 'hard to let' estates from being totally abandoned. The money is already there for the 'bolts and bars'. But resident caretakers, adequate Direct Labour Organisations to cope with speedy repairs, and more council officers based directly on estates and in neighbourhoods are precisely those services which have been hit by the Tory government squeeze on rates and the rate support grant. As for safer designs of new estates, with public housebuilding ground to a halt by Tory policy there is a grim irony in this suggestion.

The DoE has invited local authorities to submit crime prevention schemes for urban programme funding, but the government strategy of privatisation has not been neglected either in this new campaign: 'Private charities and similar bodies may be willing to fund local initiatives, while projects requiring resources in the form of manpower might usefully turn to local voluntary groups'. A main beneficiary of the goal that 'crime reduction must come to take its place in the collective thinking of every agency and every citizen' will undoubtedly be the private security industry, as a cynical author in the Policy Federation's journal recently pointed out.[1] This industry has boomed under the Tories to such an extent that the profits of some leading companies are now under close scrutiny[2].

As well as suggesting 'measures aiming to limit or remove the opportunities for crime' on the physical level, the document goes on to discuss 'those that aim to reduce the motivation of people to engage in crime'. It is at this level that the multi-agency approach takes on a less benefactory tone. Although recognising the background of urban deprivation in 'motivating' offenders, the document does not propose a large scale anti-poverty programme. Instead, responsibility is placed for instance, on the role of education welfare officers to reduce truancy, and intermediate treatment for young offenders etc, and much is made of the collection and collating of information from all agencies.

This approach to multi-agency co-ordination fits into two current trends:

1 The increasing *policing* role attached to the welfare state, such as DHSS treatment of claimants, checks on the immigration status of NHS patients, reported passport checks on Asian children at schools.

2 The redefinition of crime by the supposed practitioners of crime prevention, the police, into 'serious' crimes (eg, kidnapping, murder) which they can solve, and 'secondary' crimes (eg, car theft, break-ins), which affect tens of thousands and which they can't clear up. Their inability to prevent or solve crime (eg, the clear-up rate of only 8% for burglaries in London last year) has led the police to shift the 'blame' to other agencies, such as schools and town planners; to introduce neighbourhood watch schemes (already operating in South Wales and introduced throughout London in September), mainly as a public relations exercise which also attempts to undermine campaigns for police accountability; and to introduce a 'solvability' points scheme for dealing with burglaries (if a neighbour sees a burglar running off with your ultraviolet coded video recorder, the CID will investigate; if the milk money's missing from under the clock, they won't).

The proposed crime prevention strategy sanctions these developments. It talks of 'core' meetings: 'the police, magistracy, the social and probation services and departments of education, housing and highways will all need to be involved as well as those responsible for planning and the environment and the provision of leisure facilities'.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If the police were local government employees, accountable to council police committees, this cooperation would be a meeting of equals. But whilst the police are not truly accountable, for instance 'core' meetings such as these (or Scarman-type 'consultative' committees) will just be one-way operations, where the police extract information (to be used for 'targeting and surveillance' of 'front line' areas) without giving anything in return — whether it be information about the incidence of crimes in particular neighbourhoods or guarantees to prioritise particular crimes such as racist or sexual attacks as policing concerns.

It should be noted that the other areas where a multi-agency approach has been adopted are Northern Ireland, civil contingencies planning (such as in the event of a general strike) and in civil defence. The approach should also be seen in the context of the view that 'crime control is just one element of social control' put forward by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Kenneth Newman[3] (latterly head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and a major exponent of the new policing strategy).

Taken as an isolated document, the draft paper on crime prevention could be welcomed as attempting to tackle what is after all a vital concern for large numbers of working class people — security from theft and attack. Unfortunately the document appears at a time when police powers are to be further increased with a new Police Bill, computerisation of police files is expanding, new strategies for 'targeting and surveillance' by police of 'symbolic locations' are being implemented (eg, Notting Hill and Brixton in London) and the prospects of police accountability have disappeared from the horizon.

The new crime prevention policy will be a popular, and indeed populist, development. But it aims to bring together the repressive and welfare aspects of the state in much closer ways than hitherto; ways that go beyond *valid* cooperation to stem crime. Socialists, who have neglected the very real concerns of working people with the impact of crime on their lives, will find it difficult to counter this increased authoritarianism without offering a positive alternative for the protection of individuals and communities.

A socialist strategy will need to respond to direct experiences and not dismiss concern about crime as a sign of unbridled reaction. There needs to be an inclusion of self policing and community protection aspects into our alternative policies, for instance as part of decentralisation programmes. Police-led initiatives, such as neighbourhood watch schemes, need to be countered with community initiatives based in existing democratic and accountable bodies (ie, through councils and tenants and residents associations). Labour councils need to argue that community protection is a necessary part of their function requiring funds being available to them at borough or district level, rather than uncontrollable handouts from Whitehall. Unless such interventions begin to be made, new strategies such as these will allow the police to operate with an even higher political profile, and worse performance rate, than at present. *Brenda Kirsch*

SEX ACT — TORIES CHANGE POSITION

In 1951 the ILO Convention 100 called for a commitment by member states to equal pay for work of equal value. The UK did not ratify this Convention until 1970 when it passed the Equal Pay Act. Twelve years later the European Court ruled that our legislation did not comply with the terms of the 1975 EEC Directive on equal pay in that it did not include the right to equal pay for work of equal value. In July 1983 the House of Commons passed regulations that will amend the Equal Pay Act so that it includes the concept of equal value. Is this uncharacteristic development all that it seems?

The Equal Pay Act was the result of pressure from the growing number of women in the trade union movement, the demands of the developing women's movement and individual MPs. The TUC was forced, by the end of the 1960s, to put real pressure on the government for legislation that would make it unlawful to pay women less than men. When the Equal Pay Act was passed in 1970, manual full-time women's earnings were half of men's.

But the Act was drafted so as to have a very limited effect. It deals only with situations where women and men are doing the same or similar jobs, or where there has been a job evaluation scheme that has valued them as the same (many of these schemes are themselves discriminatory). Reality is somewhat different. A study published by the Department of Employment in 1980 showed that 45% of women and 75% of men are in jobs that are totally segregated. The Equal Pay Act does not therefore deal with the real problems of women's low pay and job segregation. By 1982 manual full-time women's earnings were still only two-thirds of men's. Positively re-evaluating the value of the work women do is crucial if low pay is going to be seriously tackled. It can be done if an imaginative approach is taken to the process of comparison, for example comparing a nurse and a computer engineer, both of whom have similar training and skills but very different levels of pay.

In 1979 the EEC started infringement proceedings against the UK because of the inadequacy of our domestic legislation. The Government fought these proceedings until 1982 when the European Court ruled that our legislation must be amended.

The Thatcher government has dealt with a situation which has been forced on them by making its amendments to the Equal Pay Act as ineffective and unworkable as possible. There is a firm belief in the Tory Party that if you increase women's pay, the cost of the goods they produce will go up and companies will be made bankrupt. The Government has built the 'market forces' argument into the amendments, giving the employer a foolproof defence and ensuring that no woman is likely to make a successful claim. The wording of the amendments is, in places, incomprehensible, and the procedures complicated and full of hurdles for women to make use of them. They will provide a field-day for lawyers but certainly will not achieve equal pay for work of equal value.

The Equal Pay Act is being amended by an Order under the European Communities Act which allows amendments of domestic legislation, bypassing the usual parliamentary channels of amendment and debate. An Order, like a statutory instrument, is an administrative measure. It cannot be amended or sent to select committee, and the debate on it lasts for 90 minutes. The Government has used this method before when dealing with controversial issues. In 1982 is used it when tinkering with the working of the Abortion Act. The equal value debate was opened by a junior minister, Alan Clarke, whose arrogant and cynical delivery left no doubt about the contempt with which he viewed women's rights. He was followed by a back bencher, Tony Marlow, whose puerile remarks about 'chips on bra straps' and 'rattle headed females' were cheered by other MPs. They got the government such a bad press that the Order has not yet been put before the Lords for fear of losing the vote on it.

[1] 'And they have the nerve to call it crime prevention!' Jack Worsley (*Police* August 1983).
[2] 'Security profits cause alarm' Charles Raw (*Sunday Times Business News* 31.7.83).
[3] *Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1982* (HMSO cmnd 8928).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many women's groups and organisations like the TUC, the EOC and NCCL campaigned against the draft proposals on the grounds that they were complicated, lengthly, potentially expensive and would not result in an improvement in women's pay or in a positive evaluation of the worth of the work women do. The campaign indicated the strength of feeling around this issue and has given an impetus to a long held understanding that the value of work should be an important element in action on workers' rights. It also showed that the post of Labour front bench spokesperson on women's issues, held till May 83 by Joan Lestor but not yet refilled, had both political and organisational value.

In the propaganda war over the role of women, the Government has made clever use of being forced to introduce equal value into the Equal Pay Act. It has tried to give the impression that it cares about equal opportunities. In a complex campaign against this ineffective introduction of equal value, it has been important to expose the negative effects of the Government's proposals but at the same time to argue that the positive introduction of this concept could have far reaching consequences.

In order to do this NCCL published an Equal Pay (Amendment) Bill 1983. It gives a rather fuller definition of equal value than the Government's. It defines areas where comparisons should be made between a woman's work and that of a man under headings such as physical or mental effort, accuracy, skill, training, responsibility for equipment or people, working conditions, stress and decision making. The Bill would require the EOC to publish a Code of Practice which would give further guidance and ensure that indirect or hidden discrimination is taken into account. It provides for equality officers who would be specially trained and would investigate and report to the industrial tribunal. Where an equal value claim had implications for the pay structure at a workplace, the case would be referred to the CAC, which has the necessary experience to deal with collective agreements. And maybe most important of all, women would have to be informed of their rights under the Equal Pay Act.

In this, as in many other respects, the Government amendments are in breach of the EEC Directive. But while lawyers in the UK are of the opinion that they do not conform to the European Court judgement, it is unlikely that the EEC will continue its legal proceedings against the UK.

All this might seem very technical and legalistic and far from the day-to-day struggles of the labour movement. But it must be recognised that legal rights are important as a basis for short term change. The Left must also recognise the paradoxical possibilities for progressive change that can come from the EEC. European law has had a significant and positive effect on sex discrimination case law in this country. It has forced our government to change some of the sex discriminatory aspects of our social security laws. At the moment our government is leading the opposition to a draft EEC directive which, if implemented, would improve the rights of part-time workers. On the question of equal pay for work of equal value, while the Government is introducing it in the most ineffective way, there has been a united campaign determined to raise the issue of women's low pay again; the PLP is now committed to opposing the amendments, and many more people are aware of the equal value concept. It is now up to the labour movement and women's organisations to make sure that the issue of women's low pay does not stop here.

Ann Sedley

POLISH ECONOMIC REFORM

The need for a radical economic reform in Poland results from the characteristic problems of the administrative economy, the economic crisis of 1979-82, and the pressure by society for reforms during the period of social renewal in 1980-81. The reform is intended to improve efficiency in the use of labour, materials and capital goods, to establish economic equilibrium, bring production into line with requirements, and to facilitate economic recovery. It is hoped to achieve these goals by establishing an economic system that offers substantial scope for enterprise initiatives within the framework of a planned economy with a built in market mechan-ism.

What is officially referred to as a 'breakthrough reform package' was outlined in the document *Kierunki Reformy Gospodarczej* approved by the 9th PUWP (Communist Party) Congress in July 1981. A series of laws on workers' self-management, planning, state enterprises, taxes, prices, banking and foreign trade, which gave legal form to specific aspects of the reform, were passed in 1981-82. The number and competence of economic ministries was reduced and industrial associations were reorganised. Wholesale and retail prices were sharply increased early in 1982.

Under the new system, economic ministries and industrial associations are supposed no longer to issue obligatory plans. Instead, enterprises themselves are to draw up their own plans, guided by anticipated profits. The central plans (perspective, five year and annual) are intended to outline future development of the economy as a whole (eg, allocation of the national income, structure of production, investment policy). It is intended that the Government will control the economic process and realise its socio-economic goals by manipulating prices, taxes, short and long term loans etc, and by utilising the market mechanism.

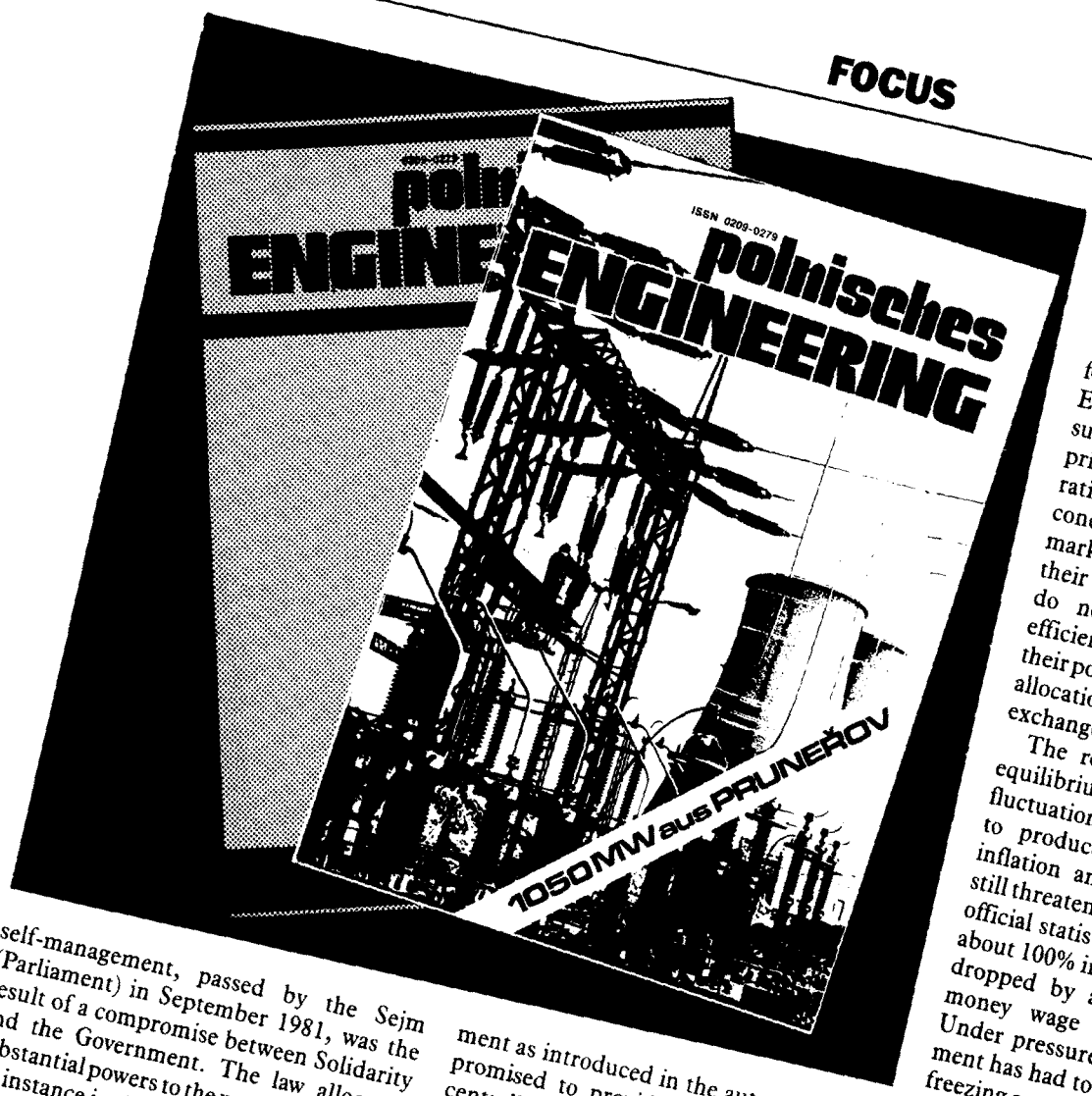
The fundamental innovations of the reform are the switch in central control from predominantly direct methods (ie, plan instructions) to predominantly indirect methods (ie, financial levers), and the establishment of enterprise autonomy. The latter comprises enterprise independence, self-finance and workers' self-management.

Enterprise independence means that enterprises themselves are free to decide on their own current operations. Decisions about the volume and assortment of production, the inputs used, techniques of production, suppliers and customers, employment, wages, marketing and allocation of profit are in principle left to the enterprises themselves to decide. In the current difficult situation, however, with severe shortages and disequilibrium and also because of social considerations, numerous products are allocated directly by the Government (for example products required for the 'operational programmes').

Self-finance means that enterprises must balance their books, avoiding losses and seeking profits. They are supposed to do this by raising efficiency and satisfying their customers. The results and significance of self-finance depend largely on the price system. There are three types of prices; fixed, regulated and free. There is also a progressive profits tax to siphon off excess profits. The reform strives to encourage enterprises themselves to rationalise production, allowing them to maximise profits left over for distribution. They are relatively free to allocate their profits between consumption (wages, bonuses and collective consumption) and investment. During the transitional period, however, self-finance is to be applied only gradually in order to prevent widespread bankruptcies, unemployment and social disruption.

Self-management, the democratic participation of enterprise personnel in management, was one of the essential aspects of the reform as envisaged in 1981. The law on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



self-management, passed by the Sejm (Parliament) in September 1981, was the result of a compromise between Solidarity and the Government. The law allocated substantial powers to the workers' councils, for instance in the preparation of the enterprise plan, approval of the balance sheet, investment plan, distribution of profits etc. Workers' councils were given the right to appoint directors on a competitive basis, with appointment by the state organs confined to certain key enterprises such as the airlines and railways.

By 13 December 1981 workers' councils had been elected in more than half the enterprises. With the declaration of martial law, however, workers' councils were suspended. Subsequently the military regime tried to reactivate them in a much watered down form. The crucial power of appointing directors was removed from their competence and returned to the state organs (ie, the old *nomenclatura* system was restored). The authority of the state organs was enlarged to include also decisions about enterprise plans, statutes and rules. The abolition of martial law was supplemented by a special regulation which empowers the state organs to dissolve a workers' council in the event of a 'violation of the legal order or basic interest of society'. Self-management as introduced in the autumn of 1981 promised to provide a social basis for a centrally planned economy with a built in market mechanism. Self-management as it exists today is just a facade for the *nomenclatura* system and the determination of all important decisions on the basis of instructions from above.

The reform was introduced during a grave economic crisis. During Poland's great depression of 1979-82, net material production, consumption and investment fell by 26%, 25% and 46% respectively; since mid-1982, however, the decline has stopped. Inflation is high and the scope of centralised allocation and directives is still large. Rationing of food and industrial consumer goods is still ubiquitous, although certain improvements have taken place, with items such as alcohol, cigarettes, washing powder etc, no longer being rationed. Shortages of raw materials, semi-finished products and fuel are widespread. Poland has received substantial aid from the USSR but Poland's trade deficit with the USSR is falling and the USSR is aiming at balance of trade equilibrium. This is one constraint on Poland's ability to overcome shortages by importing the necessary goods. Poland also has huge debts and heavy debt servicing obligations to the capitalist countries which place severe constraints on her ability to import from them. This grave economic crisis provided a very hostile environment for the reform.

Self-finance as understood by the reformers has in fact not been introduced. Enterprises can still easily obtain loans, subsidies, tax exemptions and other privileges without any obligation to rationalise production. Under prevailing conditions of severe shortages and sellers' markets, enterprises can easily pass on their high costs to the buyers. Enterprises do not have to bother about raising efficiency. Instead they strive to improve their position through bargaining for greater allocations of raw materials, fuel, foreign exchange and subsidies.

The reformers hoped to establish an equilibrium market system in which price fluctuations would convey efficiency signals to producers and consumers. In fact, inflation and market disequilibrium are still threatening the economy. According to official statistics, the cost of living rose by about 100% in 1982 and average real wages dropped by about 25% despite average money wage increases of about 50%. Under pressure from society the Government has had to compromise on prices, by freezing certain prices, increasing the share of regulated prices, maintaining or increasing price subsidies, overvaluing the zloty etc. Both the inflation and the Government's attempts to ameliorate its effects are harmful to the reform.

Improvements in the efficiency of labour and materials use do not appear to have taken place. Indeed a certain deterioration, for instance a worsening of the quality of production, seems to have taken place in some cases.

Cz Bobrowski, chairman of the Economic Advisory Council, has expressed the view that significant results from the reform are only to be expected over a period of three to five years. Given the very difficult internal economic and political situation, and the external debts and unfavourable external economic environment, any significant results from the reform would be something of a miracle. Indeed, it seems not impossibe that the reform will never be completely implemented and that in due course the country will relapse into a modified version of the traditional system whose moral, political and economic bankruptcy is well known. Despite this, significant economic growth is possible in the next few years because of the extent to which current production levels are below those of 1978.

Michael Ellman
Batara Simatupang

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Soviet Booklets
YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS
Well-produced paperbacks on a wide variety of themes.

- ☐ 1. Socialism: Theory and Practice (STP) No. 6 1983 – **A. Gromyko** USSR-USA: two approaches to the problem of parity of forces (50p)
- ☐ 2. STP No. 7 1983 – **F. Castro:** Peace, social progress and the developing countries. **Y. Volkov:** The historical place of developed socialism (50p)
- ☐ 3. STP No. 8 1983 – **Y. Kornilov:** Poland in the plans of imperialism (50p)
- ☐ 4. STP No. 9 September 1983 – **I. Melnikov:** Western Europe and the USA: where their interests differ (50p)
- ☐ 5. Peoples of the USSR: Facts and Figures (30p)
- ☐ 6. The Soviet Union: Facts, Problems, Appraisals 3rd Edition (45p)
- ☐ 7. **Y. Andropov** – Our Aim is to Preserve Peace (30p)
- ☐ 8. Lenin on Students of Revolution (30p)
- ☐ 9. On the 80th Anniversary of the 2nd RSDLP Congress (20p)
- ☐ 10. The First Soviet Government (30p)
- ☐ 11. Union of Fraternal Nations (USSR 60th Anniv.) (50p)
- ☐ 12. Vienna Talks: Clear the Way to Agreement! (35p)
- ☐ 13. Suicide for Europe (20p)
- ☐ 14. How would Disarmament affect each of us (30p)
- ☐ 15. Spitzbergen: Archipelago of Good-Neighbourliness (30p)
- ☐ 16. Argument on the Nuclear Brink (30p)
- ☐ 17. Disarmament: The Main Soviet Proposals (30p)
- ☐ 18. The World Shall Not Be Blown Up (30p)
- ☐ 19. How to Avert the Threat to Europe (50p)
- ☐ 20. The Battle of the Kursk Salient (30p)
- ☐ 21. On Defence of the Socialist Motherland for the Future (30p)
- ☐ 22. Fundamentals of Political Knowledge (30p)
- ☐ 23. Lenin on the Strategy and Tactics of Revolutionary Parties (40p)
- ☐ 24. How to Strengthen Peace and Security in Europe (30p)
- ☐ 25. 100 Questions and Answers – New Edition (50p)
- ☐ 26. **Andrei Gromyko** – On the International Situation and the Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union (30p)
- ☐ 27. Stop Terrorism (50p)
- ☐ 28. Siberia and the Siberians (50p)
- ☐ 29. Nature Conservation (50p)
- ☐ 30. Soviet Space Studies (40p)
- ☐ 31. Economic Uses of Space Technology (40p)
- ☐ 32. Salyut Takes Over (40p)
- ☐ 33. The Dream World of American Policy (20p)
- ☐ 34. Under the Cover of Inter-American Solidarity (30p)

To: Soviet Booklets (M.T.D.), 3 Rosary Gardens, London SW7 4NW. Please send me paperbacks as ticked. I enclose £.....PO/Cheque. Block Letters Please

Name .....

Address .....

.....

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO AFTER FINISHING THIS ARTICLE?

What do you do after reading Marxism Today? Take a cold bath to dampen down the shock of such a stimulating experience? Stay up all night waiting for Breakfast TV? Try to read Capital in a weekend? Well! this offer if just for you. Work off your excitement by finding out more about the party which puts into action many of the ideas expressed in Marxism Today — the Communist Party

Send to
Gordon McLennan,
16 St. John Street, London EC1M 4AY
Telephone: 01-251 4406.

I wish to join/wish to know more about
The Communist Party/The Young Communist League.
Name _____

Address _____

_____ **Phone** _____

raven 8-10 Gt. Ancoats St. Manchester M4 5AD
a workers' co-op (t.u.)

stunning
MARX
CENTENARY
t-shirts
£2.95 inc p&p
+sweatshirts
at £5.25
state size
S, M or L

also
Printing
to your design
t-shirts
from £2 each
061-228 2901
ring for details

new left *review*

141

War and Peace in the 1980s

Fred Halliday The New Cold War in the Caribbean
Ernest Mandel The Predicament of the Peace Movements
Riccardo Parboni The Battle over the Dollar
Heather Moroney Feminism at Work
Satyajit Ray My Life, My Work

In our next issue:
Roy Medvedev Prospects for a Sino-Soviet Rapprochement

single copies $5/£1.90; subs (6 issues) $22/£9 (UK only)

new left review 15 Greek Street, London W1V 5LF

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Labour's collapse in June was worse than anyone expected: but what can we do about it?

Eric Hobsbawm

Labour's Lost Millions

FIVE YEARS AGO the question was raised in this journal whether 'the forward march of Labour' had been halted. This led to a long debate, later elaborated into a book. Looking back on this debate from late 1983, two things strike me about it: *first,* the sheer refusal of some of the Left to look unwelcome facts in the face, even though they were already obvious to any unblinkered observer, and *second,* the failure of even the gloomiest among us to appreciate the rate and distance of Labour's imminent retreat. The Labour vote, while slowly eroding over the years, had not usually dropped by more than a couple of hundred thousand between elections, win or lose. There was no reason to suppose that it would suddenly collapse.

Yet this is exactly what has happened. And before some of us have quite managed to retreat into an imaginary world behind the screens which self-delusion is already erecting to shelter us from the grim sight of reality, it is important to remind ourselves just how terrible a beating the labour movement took at the 1983 election. It is not just that Labour lost *one in five* of its already low number of votes. It is the massive defection of supporters of *all* classes, ages and genders.

In 1983 Labour is larger than other parties only among unskilled/semi-skilled workers, the unemployed and trade unionists, *but had majority support among none of these groups,* not even the unskilled/semi-skilled workers and the unemployed. They had lost support since 1979 among all three. Only 35% of skilled workers voted Labour: down by more than a quarter. Only 39% of trade unionists supported the party they had founded: a similar drop. Women had shown a slight swing to Labour in 1979, but in 1983 they abandoned the party at a greater rate than men. 41% of the young (first-time voters aged 18-22) had chosen Labour in 1979, a modest enough result for a party which ought to be able to inspire young people. But in 1983 the situation is quite disastrous. Only 17% of first-time voters chose Labour, 3% less than chose the Alliance, 11% less than the Tories — while almost *half* did not bother to vote at all. Of those who bothered to vote only 29% put their cross against Labour candidates.

Declining assets

In short, there is not a glimmer of comfort in the results of this election. As has been correctly said: 'The Labour vote remains largely working class; but the working class has ceased to be largely Labour.' The surviving stock of Labour voters consists largely of people living in Scotland and the North (but Wales is no longer the stronghold it was), or in decaying inner cities, of people employed in the traditional and rapidly declining industries of Britain's past and/or in the public sector, and is more apt than not to be elderly, or black, and council tenants. The most that can be said is that the geographical concentration of the Labour vote makes it likely that the party will continue to send a substantial block of members into the Commons even if it sinks further, and that it will still be in a position to control a number of important local authorities. If this were not so, it could *already* have been reduced to a couple of dozen or so seats, like the Liberal-SDP Alliance, which, after all, has a comparable, if slightly smaller number of votes. In any case, on present showing, Labour is living on declining assets.

The disaster which has struck the party is underlined by the fact that Thatcherite Toryism has done quite poorly itself. True, it has held far more of its 1979 support than it could have been expected to do, but it lost ground nevertheless. The Tory vote is lower than 1979, much lower than under Heath, and it has mobilised just under 31% of the total electorate, counting those who did not want or bother to vote at all. This is a smaller share of voters than at any time since 1923. The triumph of Thatcher is the by-product of the defeat of Labour. That is the measure of the task which now confronts us.

The long-term reasons for Labour's decline, discussed at length in the debate on *The Forward March of Labour Halted,* are clear enough. But while they suggested that Labour's decline would continue, unless the party did some drastic re-thinking, they did not suggest an imminent catastrophe. Arguments rage about why Labour fell apart so dramatically, but unfortunately most of them are superficial, and a lot of them are self-serving wishful dreams, and quite unverifiable. There is not much point in arguing the toss about the precise importance of the redistribution of seats, the anti-Labour bias in the media, or the effect of polls, about the lack of money and the competence of our campaign propaganda, the image of the party leadership, the weakness of constituency organisation, or the visibly growing despair and demoralisation of Labour's national spokesmen as the campaign advanced. Actually some of these weaknesses were not so much contributory causes as symptoms of the party's impending defeat. There is no point at all in arguing whether candidates of the right or left did significantly better or worse. So far as one can tell, whether candidates did (relatively) well depended overwhelmingly on the location and social composition of the constituency. The chances of any Labour candidate, right or left, in the industrial towns of southern England, which we had once won and should have won, proved to be virtually zero. The chances of a Labour candidate in Strathclyde were good, whether or not he/she supported Tony Benn. The party looked like losing before the campaign started, and it was clobbered.

Lost in advance

Only two things can and must be said about the election, and said very firmly.

The first is that far too many people in the opposition parties were not seriously trying to defeat Thatcher, whatever their official rhetoric. Perhaps initially, after 1979, many believed that the combination of mass unemployment on so vast a scale and an economic policy which looked as though it simply could not work, was automatically bound to put paid to a government that was widely disliked and distrusted even within the Tory establishment. But as time went on, it became

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

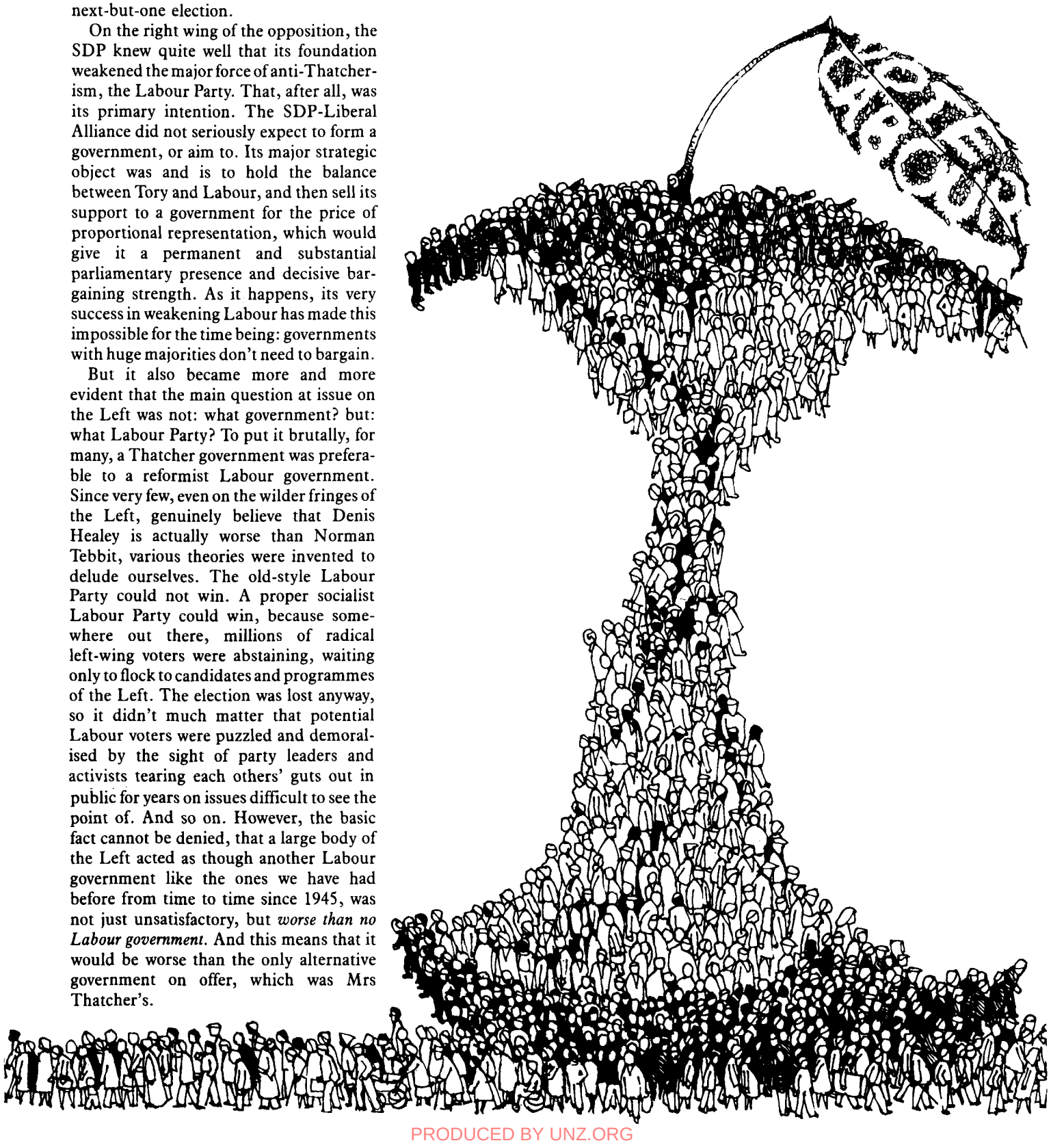
increasingly clear that the opposition parties were engaged in a civil war rather than in fighting the Right. They acted as though the next election was already lost in advance, and indeed I have heard people on the Left privately say as much. The fight was about the nature of the opposition to the second Thatcher government, or the next-but-one election.

On the right wing of the opposition, the SDP knew quite well that its foundation weakened the major force of anti-Thatcherism, the Labour Party. That, after all, was its primary intention. The SDP-Liberal Alliance did not seriously expect to form a government, or aim to. Its major strategic object was and is to hold the balance between Tory and Labour, and then sell its support to a government for the price of proportional representation, which would give it a permanent and substantial parliamentary presence and decisive bargaining strength. As it happens, its very success in weakening Labour has made this impossible for the time being: governments with huge majorities don't need to bargain.

But it also became more and more evident that the main question at issue on the Left was not: what government? but: what Labour Party? To put it brutally, for many, a Thatcher government was preferable to a reformist Labour government. Since very few, even on the wilder fringes of the Left, genuinely believe that Denis Healey is actually worse than Norman Tebbit, various theories were invented to delude ourselves. The old-style Labour Party could not win. A proper socialist Labour Party could win, because somewhere out there, millions of radical left-wing voters were abstaining, waiting only to flock to candidates and programmes of the Left. The election was lost anyway, so it didn't much matter that potential Labour voters were puzzled and demoralised by the sight of party leaders and activists tearing each others' guts out in public for years on issues difficult to see the point of. And so on. However, the basic fact cannot be denied, that a large body of the Left acted as though another Labour government like the ones we have had before from time to time since 1945, was not just unsatisfactory, but *worse than no Labour government*. And this means that it would be worse than the only alternative government on offer, which was Mrs Thatcher's.

The new Toryism

This attitude raises grave problems of political judgment. Not only did it (as is now totally obvious) grossly misread the attitude of the voters to the Labour Party, but it also, and more dangerously, underestimates the historical novelty of Thatcherism and the seriousness of the threat it represents. Past Tory governments were based on the principle of avoiding class confrontation in order to prevent a radicalisation of the working class, which represented the substantial majority of the British people. Therefore, with occasional, mainly verbal, concessions to their backwoodspeople, they shared a basic approach



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to policy with the 'moderate' reformist leadership of Labour ('Butskellism'). Give or take a few changes in emphasis, and allowing for the growing problems of the British economy, and the gradual obsolescence of the reformist structures built in 1944-1948, until Thatcher intervals of Conservative government did not make any serious difference to the prospects of Labour governments.

This is no longer so. Thatcherism is committed to a radical and reactionary change in British capitalism, and indeed in the British political system. It is pushing ahead with this new, militant, and formidable policy of class struggle from above, and the dismantling of the past reformist consensus with all the more confidence, because it has discovered that the weakening of and divisions within the working class and the self-ruination of the Labour Party make it apparently much less risky than the old Toryism had supposed. Thatcherism aims to transform Britain irreversibly in its own way, not just to keep the system on an even keel. To defeat it, is therefore more than the routine demand of any opposition when it happens not to be in government. It is the condition of survival for a decent Britain, and of such chances as exist of advancing to a better society.

The split in the anti-Tory vote

The second point which must be hammered home is that Thatcherism won because the anti-Thatcher majority was split. And it was split because great masses of people who had previously voted Labour, who would have found it inconceivable *not* to vote Labour, or who might have been confidently expected to vote Labour chose, on grounds which seemed good to them, not only to stay at home but to vote for other parties. For the first time since the original decline of the Liberal Party, from which Labour benefited, British workers think they have a choice between rival anti-Tory parties or political alignments. The anti-Tory vote is roughly split down the middle (28%, 26%).

So long as this is so, the chances of defeating Thatcherism must be remote, unless there is a really spectacular collapse of the Tory vote in favour of one opposition group to the left of Conservatism. For, given the approximately even split between the two parts of the anti-Tory vote, the Conservatives could drop about a quarter of their total vote, and still come first past the post.

It is vital to keep this point in mind for the next five years, because the prospect of defeating Thatcher hinges on it, whatever else the labour movement does to recover. If, at the next election, Thatcherism is everywhere opposed by two or more candidates competing for each other's votes, the Tories can look forward to being in power well into the 1990s. Some way of uniting the majority of the British people which is opposed to Thatcherism, must be found.

This will be difficult, both for subjective and objective reasons. The mere suggestion that Labour and Social Democrats/Alliance might come to an electoral arrangement is likely to produce apoplexy on both sides, whether or not it is today a realistic proposition. That is natural enough. Relations between the two sides are unlikely to become more relaxed, since both will spend much of the next years fighting for each other's supporters. Moreover, it is already clear that each side will have trouble maintaining effective unity — of right and left within the Labour Party, between Liberals and Social Democrats, as well as within each of these far from united parties. But the issue of electoral unity will have to be faced nevertheless.

More seriously, it may be misleading to assume that all anti-Tory opinion, whatever the differences, is at least objectively united by anti-Thatcherism. This is to underestimate the basic shift in British politics which Thatcherism has systematically set out to achieve — and has already gone some way to achieving. Take John Maynard Keynes, whose ideas symbolised for a generation the underlying reformist consensus of British big business and the leadership of the Tory, Liberal and Labour Parties. In this year, the centenary of his birth, he is almost a forgotten man. The mixed economy, the welfare state, economic management through a large public sector, the 'acceptable face of capitalism', stability through arrangements between state, business and official Labour, are out. This does not mean that there is much sympathy outside the Thatcherite sector of the Tory Party for what Andrew Gamble has called 'the blooming of a thousand exotic ideological flowers and rank weeds' which flourish on the radical Right, and find know-nothing tycoons, ambitious intellectuals, and media hacks to cultivate them. But it does mean that much of what started as a purely Thatcherite speciality, is now widely shared outside the Tory Party: for instance hostility to public bureaucracy, to state economic management (identified with 'state socialism'), to unions, a rabid anti-Marxism, as well as a reversion to pseudo-imperial flag-waving. From now on there is a Thatcherite element in the opposition (one thinks of David Owen), as well as a Thatcherite government. To this extent it is not enough to say: all we need to do is to unite the 57% who voted against the Government. Nevertheless, the problem of uniting the majority remains fundamental.

> Attlee had the charisma of an average building society branch manager

GIVING LABOUR A CHANCE

What must be done to give Labour a chance of making a comeback?

Two things. Labour must, of course, recover the support of the working class as a whole, but Labour must also become, once again, the party of *all* who want democracy, a better and fairer society, irrespective of the class pigeon-hole into which pollsters and market researchers put them: in short, to use the old Labour phrase, 'all workers by hand and brain' — and that includes not only the vast majority of Britons who earn wages and salaries. It is an error to see this as a matter of making opportunistic concessions to win votes. There is nothing opportunistic about the belief that a nuclear arms race is the way to disaster, and in saying so Labour is already appealing for support across class lines. It is not opportunistic to believe that we can and should appeal to *all* women and *all* young people, even if we may not expect much success today among the ladies who attend Ascot or among the Sloane Rangers. (But some of us remember that in the days of the 1930s, anti-fascism had a mass base in such strongholds of the ruling class as Oxbridge). It is not even opportunistic to take account of quite reasonable demands of bodies of people who are not satisfied that at present they are adequately met by Labour — of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

home-owners, people who are dissatisfied with their children's schooling, or worried about law and order. For one thing, they include a lot of workers.

More than a class party

Anyway, Labour was never *only* a class party. Britain in the past was so overwhelmingly a country of manual workers, that it is often forgotten that Labour marched forward by mobilising not only the proletariat as a proletariat, but a wide coalition of forces. It mobilised the women, the minority nations and ethnic minorities of the United Kingdom (except in Ulster): the Welsh, the Scots, the Irish in Britain, the Jews. It mobilised the intellectuals, academic or otherwise. It took over most of the heritage of nineteenth century Liberalism, which had exercised a similar wide appeal in its day. And until quite recently it has shown a continued capacity to win non-workers. For instance, as late as 1979, the minority among the higher managerial and professional, and the lower managerial and administrative groups which supported Labour (about 20% and 25% respectively), was still distinctly on the increase. We cannot abandon this tradition of being a broad people's party, for if Labour were to recover *only* the support of the manual working class, it would probably no longer be enough to give it victory, given the decline in its numbers and the rate of deindustrialisation.

Nevertheless, unless Labour can once again become the party of the majority of the working class it has no future, except as a coalition of minority pressure groups and interests. There is only a modest future for a party which represents only such groups, and social forces on the decline. If Labour cannot get back the sort of communities represented by Stevenage, or Harlow, or Swindon, or Slough, we can forget about the British or any other realistic road to socialism.

Why has Labour lost these and many other places? Certainly not simply because of the numerical decline of the working class and the growing sectionalism which, as Thatcher realised, can divide its votes. The long-term erosion of Labour's traditional position as *the* workers' party, cannot explain the spectacular loss of 20% of Labour's vote in four years. Nor will it do to blame the workers, or any one or more sections of them. Millions of people who might have been expected to vote Labour, abandoned the party in 1983, not because they suddenly ceased to see themselves as workers, but because they felt the party did not represent their interests and aspirations adequately or effectively. The solution lies not in changing the workers, but the party.

The loyalty syndrome

The body of party activists and more or less fully engaged politicians (which is now very different in social composition from the body of Labour voters), has been slow to recognise what is implied by the need for the party to change. For, in spite of what historians, sociologists and political scientists were already saying in the 1970s, they still assumed that for most workers the party was 'our team', which they supported the way one supports Arsenal or Spurs, ie, irrespective of what happens on the pitch. 60% or so of workers identified with Labour, and until the late 1960s almost all of them would vote Labour, rain or shine — though of course that wasn't enough. Naturally this meant that these workers assumed that Labour, broadly speaking, stood for what they wanted and would act in their interests when in government, but they were little bothered about the details of the programme, which few of them read, or about the embittered divisions, purges and personal rivalries which have plagued the party almost since its foundation, or about the image and charisma of its leaders. Labour's greatest triumph was scored under Attlee, who had the charisma of an average building society branch manager, against Churchill, who had star quality to give away.

While this was so, it did not seem to matter too much in the short run what happened among the few hundred Labour politicians and the few tens of thousands of Labour activists and militants[1], who fought over party constitution, policy and strategy, since at least ten million supporters would cheer on the team, never mind who was appointed as manager. In the long run, of course, it mattered a great deal, since reversing Labour's retreat and the prospects of a better Britain, depended on the outcome. But until the 1980s few seriously believed that the usual solid minimum support would not line up behind any candidate, any leadership, or any programme that carried the label of the workers' party. After all, as R H Tawney had once said, solidarity was the name of the working class game. The question was not whether this basic support could be relied on, but whether it was enough.

The widening gulf

It was not enough. And, above all, it can no longer be relied on. The working class has changed. The country has changed. The situation has changed. And, let us not forget, the party too has changed and quite a few of its old supporters do not recognise themselves so readily in it. If these changes were not very substantial, Labour could still hope to poll 60% of the vote in Wales and win all but four seats, as it did in 1966, instead of being down to 37% of the vote and 12 seats out of 38 in 1983. And Wales, let us remember, was a country in which everything combined to create a Labour and socialist stronghold: a massive, organised and militant working class, national sentiment, almost universal anti-Toryism and democratic egalitarianism, a tradition of peace movements, a passion for education, and, not least, an inspiring roll-call of great names, socialist and communist, which belonged to the valleys: Keir Hardie, A J Cook, Arthur Horner, Aneurin Bevan, Michael Foot. But all this has not been enough.

Because Labour activists have been reluctant to admit this, a widening gap has developed between them and the supporters who can still be mobilised by the call of the old bugles, and those who no longer can be. During the election campaign enthusiastic meetings of one lot cheered a party manifesto designed for them — it was, in fact, practically unreadable for anyone else — and failed to notice that the other lot, which consisted of millions of workers, were simply not convinced of Labour's case. They needed reasons for voting which persuaded *them*, not just flags behind which to rally.

How to convince

Concretely, they needed convincing under four heads.

First, that they actually wanted what Labour stood for. The old words are no longer enough. Thus for convinced socialists it is enough to call for socialism, but not for men and women who associate the word, no doubt with the enthusiastic assistance of the media, with more state power and public bureaucracy, which they have learned to distrust, with more nationalisation, of which we already seem to have plenty, and — let us admit it — with countries in which workers are less well-off and less free than in the non-socialist countries with which they are most familiar. We have to show once again how and why the kind of fair, free, socially just and prosperous society they want requires socialism.

Second, that Labour's policy is not only desirable, but realistic. Like it or not, we must answer Thatcherite and similar arguments which have by now spread widely ('who is to pay for it all?' etc,) in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terms which they understand. We cannot afford to promise to create a few million jobs in five years, if we cannot convince people, however much they would love to see it happen, that any government is capable of achieving this under present world conditions. And in fact, we did not convince them.

Third that Labour is the party of all workers, not merely of some sections of them. No doubt we had a policy which appealed to tenants, but the many workers who are buying their own homes or want to also need to feel that Labour has a policy for them. And the party, in turn, must be as aware as the workers themselves are, that the sectional interests of some groups are not merely different from others, but sometimes in conflict. This creates genuinely knotty problems which cannot simply be waved away.

Finally, and this is perhaps the most difficult task, that Labour has a chance. If workers were to stop seeing Labour as the alternative to Thatcherism, even more of them would vote, with or without regret,

> too many people in the opposition parties were not seriously trying to defeat Thatcher

for candidates or parties who seem to have the best chance of beating the Tories. Already there are too many seats where Labour is the third party, and often a rather poor third. But the future of the party cannot rest on this or any other tactical or pragmatic appeal. The Liberal Party has survived, in spite of its negligible electoral prospects over many years, because it never lost a substantial body of people who would vote Liberal regardless of practical considerations or advantage: because they believed in Liberalism. The most dangerous symptom of Labour's sickness is that in 1983 its vote went to pieces in many parts, notably of England, where it had never had much chance of electing more than the odd councillor, but where men and women nevertheless voted Labour out of conviction: because they thought Labour was right. But if they are to do so again, the party must be such that they can believe in it again.

The danger of isolation

All this requires some fundamental rethinking of Labour's struggle and objectives, for the situation is desperately serious.

The danger, especially on the Left, is not only that the activists may be unaware of their and the party's isolation from ordinary people, but that they may not care. They may actually give up the struggle for the workers as a whole, not to mention other sections of the people who do not happen to agree with the 'correct' policy or the way the party is run. They may choose their supporters to fit their convictions, in which case it is likely that the others will look elsewhere. For instance, they may see their most congenial constituency as 'the dispossessed', in 'the centre of a big decaying city', cosmopolitan and racially mixed, and look for a parliamentary seat in preference in such a place. 'It would be a mistake to stand in a safe seat with a solid white skilled working class . . . I wouldn't be happy there anyway' (Ken Livingstone). Would it be surprising if the sort of people who have formed 'the historic spine of the Labour Party' (Bea Campbell) would not be happy with such a candidate either? The strength of the labour movement has always been that it could represent *all* parts of the working class — both Stepney and the Fife coalfield — and did not discriminate against any. If Ken Livingstone, who is one of the ablest, most prominent, most attractive and strategically placed figures in the party, feels really at ease with only some kinds of the inhabitants of Greater London — is it not reasonable to fear that it will be difficult for him to realise his own and his party's political potential in Britain's greatest city?[2]

Or again, how can we say: 'Though it would be foolish to ignore *wholly* (my emphasis — EJH) the view of the electorate, it would be fatal if the Labour Party now started to fish around for a set of policies that upset no one and thus changed nothing.'? (Tony Banks MP in *The Guardian* 17 Aug 1983). Are we going to be in a position to change anything if we do not pay attention to the 16% of trade unionists who have stopped voting Labour since 1974, to the 71% of youngsters who voted, but refused to choose Labour, to the 72% of women who voted Tory or Alliance? To pay attention to them is not to betray socialism, but an essential condition of any likely socialist advance in this country. May there not be good as well as bad reasons why they have stopped looking to Labour?

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES

Every traditional labour and socialist mass movement in the West has seen a certain erosion of its traditional support since the 1950s, and for very similar reasons. The Labour Party is a particularly dramatic case, but not the only one. All have been faced with the task of doing something about it. Much the worst option is that proposed in some quarters of the Labour Left (or the ultra-left which has colonised the empty spaces in the organisations of the movement left by the withdrawal of the masses from the party). This is to establish a 'correct' position and wait for the British people to recognise how wrong they are in not agreeing with it. As for those who show their disagreement by voting with their feet or the ballot-papers, good riddance to bad rubbish. History is full of sects, both religious and political, who have taken such a view, and are still waiting — even if they haven't, like the old ILP after the 1930s, practically disappeared from sight. There is no future in turning the Labour Party into a body of this kind. It will just go on declining, until in the end it will risk even that unique asset of the British labour movement, a single trade union movement affiliated to a single political party. It will not even turn into the clear-headed and unified socialist party we would all want, because its various left components, now united against the right, will quite surely go on battling each other to the death over their various, and conflicting ideas of what constitutes the 'correct' positions.

Neo-socialist parties.

Two other strategies have been tried, with greater prospects of success. The first is what may be called 'neo-socialism', as in France and Spain. This implies abandoning the traditional character of such parties as mass parties, based on mass organisations, especially those of the working class, and turns them into common electoral fronts of all who are, for one reason or another, opposed to reaction, interested in reforms, and prepared to sympathise with progressive appeals. This strategy has certainly succeeded in restoring the fortunes of parties which had fallen much lower than the Labour Party, eg, the French Socialist Party, which was in steep decline fifteen years ago, and the Spanish Socialist Party, which was virtually a shell company ten years ago. It has proved capable of striking electoral triumphs, some of them with strong left-wing programmes, as in France and Greece. Moreover, such a government

[1] P Whiteley, 'The decline of Labour's Local Party Membership and Electoral Base, 1945-79', in D Kavanagh ed *The Politics of The Labour Party* (London 1982), p 115, estimates the real number of party activists in the whole of Britain at around 55,000 in 1978.

[2] The quotations in this paragraph are from his interview with Bea Campbell in *City Limits* 1-7 July 1983, p 10.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as Mitterrand's in France has done much to carry out its programme, so far as this was within its power.

The weakness of this strategy lies in the instability of the political support gained in this manner — this also is evident in France — the lack of activity and feedback from the citizens, the undoubted temptations of opportunism it encourages, and the lack of any organic base for the policies of such parties. They may sometimes be radical, but they do not have to be, and are not even very likely to be. If socialists can welcome, and sympathise with, Mitterrand in France, they can at best still keep an open mind about the government of Felipe Gonzalez in Spain, but they will almost certainly take a dim view of the (mainly anti-left) manoeuvres of the Portuguese Socialist Party of Mario Soares, and an even dimmer view of the combination of backstairs dealing, corruption, mafia tactics, demagogy and opportunism by which the Italian Socialist Party of Bettino Craxi has tried to rebuild itself. The Labour Party can certainly learn *something* from the experience of neo-socialist parties, notably how elections can be won without necessarily compromising one's programme, and that comebacks are possible — but this is not a model which invites uncritical imitation.

> Labour is living on declining assets

The example of the PCI

The other strategy has no equally striking triumphs (unless we count the splendid comeback of the Swedish Socialist Party under Palme, in alliance with the Communists and with a good programme), but is more immediately relevant. For the Italian Communist Party, which can serve as illustration, is and wishes to remain a classical mass socialist labour party, attempting to rally the widest range of forces around its essential core of the organised working class. It has tried to do so through an era when Italian society has been spectacularly transformed — including the working class — against powerful competition from both Left and Right, not to mention under conditions of systematic exclusion from national government. And yet it has gained ground over the decades, and, while it dropped back a little between 1976 and 1980, it has been stronger, since the middle 70s than ever before. It has long been the unquestioned second party in the country, and is today running the Christian Democrats, the party of government since the war, closer than ever before (30% against 33%). This is not an unimpressive record.

It has succeeded, not because its basic body of support has been unswervingly solid, but because it has known how to hold it, win back some or all of its losses, and extend its support to new social strata and groups, in new conditions. During the years since 1950 it has from time to time lost, and recovered, much working class support in the Northern industrial cities. In recent decades it lost quite heavily in the more backward South, and though it has only partly recovered, recently it has advanced again — and very strikingly in the region of Naples, where it has also recaptured the industrial zones it had lost. It is today the first party, ahead of the Christian Democrats, in almost all the major cities of Italy, North and South. Its most solid stronghold, Central Italy (Tuscany, Emilia, Umbria) has changed out of recognition socially and economically. It is today a prosperous belt of dynamic small and medium industrial enterprise as well as commercial farming, and probably the spearhead of Italy's economic development: the sort of area to which, if it were in California, Thatcherite propaganda would be pointing as a model of a go-ahead economy. If this zone is still as solid and red as ever, it is not because its inhabitants are blindly loyal, but because the party has shown, largely through its policy in local and regional government, which is recognised as a model — Bologna must be one of the best-administered cities in Europe — that the Left can have a policy for this kind of development. In Bologna and Florence even businessmen would be worried if the Christian Democrats took over: for one thing because they would be strikingly more inefficient and corrupt.

The contrast here is not only with the Labour Party, but also with some other mass communist parties which have failed to halt the recently accelerating erosion of their mass base among workers and intellectuals, as in France. The Italian CP has had its share of mistakes and poor analyses, and its own record of failing from time to time to keep in touch with changes in its own country, including in the working class. But it has not lived in and on its past, it has recognised realities and social changes, when they became inescapable, it has never written off its former supporters, and has avoided sectarianism above all. And it has never forgotten that the party of the working class must also be the party of the people. Its policy is certainly open to serious criticism, which it has not stifled within its ranks and even within its leadership. But it has at least been able to demonstrate that the way of a classical socialist labour party does not necessarily have to be downhill in the late twentieth century.

LABOUR'S ASSET

Yet the Italian Communist Party, and indeed practically all other socialist and communist parties in countries with real elections, have lost, or never had, the major asset enjoyed by the Labour Party in the past, namely the capacity to win an election and form a government single-handed. That is why the arguments about the policy of Labour governments and the British road to socialism, have had a unique urgency in this country. Parties which are incapable of winning single-party majorities (if only because their electoral systems make this practically impossible) can speculate about the prospects of socialist transformation, but under conditions of democracy their governments will almost invariably be at the mercy of coalition partners who act as brakes on them.

The ability to form a single-handed socialist government is not, of course, enough. In the first place the best government today is at the mercy of the world situation — for instance in economic affairs. No single nation has any real control over this, except perhaps the USA which can unload its problems on other and weaker economies abroad. The transformation of society today, whatever its shape, must have an international dimension. In the second place, the best socialist government has to be re-elected. It must maintain support. The idea that socialism can be irreversibly installed in five years is a fantasy, and the idea that socialist governments, once established, should abolish genuine elections is, or should be, unacceptable. Still, the position of the Labour Party in the past was unusually favourable, and hence disappointment with the performance of Labour governments is understandably, and justifiably, sharp.

The immediate and crucial question before us is whether Labour, which seems to have lost this unique position, can regain it. If the party cannot do that, then it will be useless to console ourselves with the thought that a large permanent minority has voted for a sounder socialist programme than in the days of Wilson, or will stop that programme being betrayed if there is another Labour government. For there will be none. If a minority Labour Party gets into government, it will be on terms

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

negotiated with some other partner — Liberals, SDP or whoever — and by their consent. If Labour refuses to enter government on those terms, as it reasonably might, it will be a permanent opposition. The perspectives of such an opposition, like it or not, cannot be to change society, but only to make it less intolerable. It will have no option but to be, in practice, 'reformist', or to make noise, or to wait for a near-miracle.

This means that, like it or not, Labour will either have to win back those who switched from Labour to the Alliance, those who stayed at home, and a lot of those who are increasingly opting out of politics. Or alternately, it will have to learn how to lead a broad front of other parties or their supporters into backing Labour's policy. This is not impossible. But it means, first of all, understanding why the people who left us or stayed away did not wish to vote Labour, and if we are to lead them forward we have to get them to vote or support Labour for reasons which seem good to *them*, even if we do not like their reasons. That, by the way, is how socialists once built the Labour Party and eventually got it committed to a socialist objective, starting with a working class and others who were Liberals, Conservatives or something else and who did not vote for Labour because no more than a small minority were attracted by socialism or knew what it was. They learned as they struggled — but the socialists were with them to help the learning. Rebuilding Labour, or building a broad front around Labour, will once again be like that. We think the masses need Labour, but if we ask them to come to us on our terms, they won't. Not any more. Then the chances are they will never find out what Labour could do for them.

And neither will we. □

LEEDS CND BADGES

Present this and . . .

Cat lovers, Real Ale Drinkers, Dog lovers, Ageing Hippies (M&F), Birdwatchers, Trainspotters, Cyclists, Morris Dancers (M&F), Musicians, Special Branch and More — Against the Bomb.

25p each + SAE to LANG, 20 Kelso Road, Leeds 2. Bulk (Over 10): 16p + 10% p&p (Cheques 'Leeds CND') to A. Beal, 32 Naseby Grange, Leeds 9 (over 50 p&p free)

COMMUNIST **FOCUS**

Communist Party Journal

Special pre-Congress numbers!

The issues, the debates the controversies inside the Communist Party.

Available from Central Books, 14, The Leathermarket, London SE1 (Tel. 01 407 5447)

The Left and the Erotic

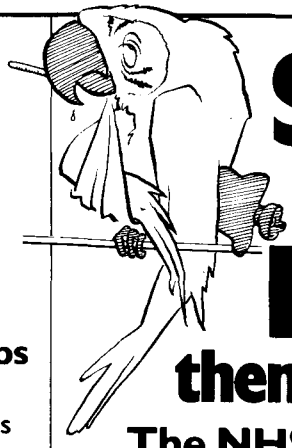
edited and introduced by Eileen Phillips

This book examines the fraught relationship between political activism and personal politics. Is there a politics of sex? What is the connection between the two?

Contributions include:

Elizabeth Wilson – *A New Romanticism?*
Angela Carter on women in literature
John Cook on sexuality in history
Noël Greig – *The Body Electric* – on the relationship between the left and the gay movement
Frankie Rickford – 'sisterhood' and lesbian sexuality.
Zelda Curtis – *Private Lives and Communism*
Mick Eaton – on Victorian attitudes to male sexuality
Michèle Roberts – poems

£3.95 pbk, £8.95 hbk



Sick as a Parrot?

then read

The NHS:
A Picture of Health? by Steve Iliffe

The National Health Service now faces its most severe crisis ever. Thatcherites are proposing its dismantlement, while many of its users feel that despite the service it offers, the NHS is remote from their everyday lives.

Steve Iliffe, a GP, traces the evolution of health care in Britain; its place in the labour and women's movements and the problem of private practice, underfinancing, the private drugs companies and class inequalities. A strategy is proposed which combines the traditional socialist objective of free medical care with democratic management by the service's workers and users.

£3.95pbk

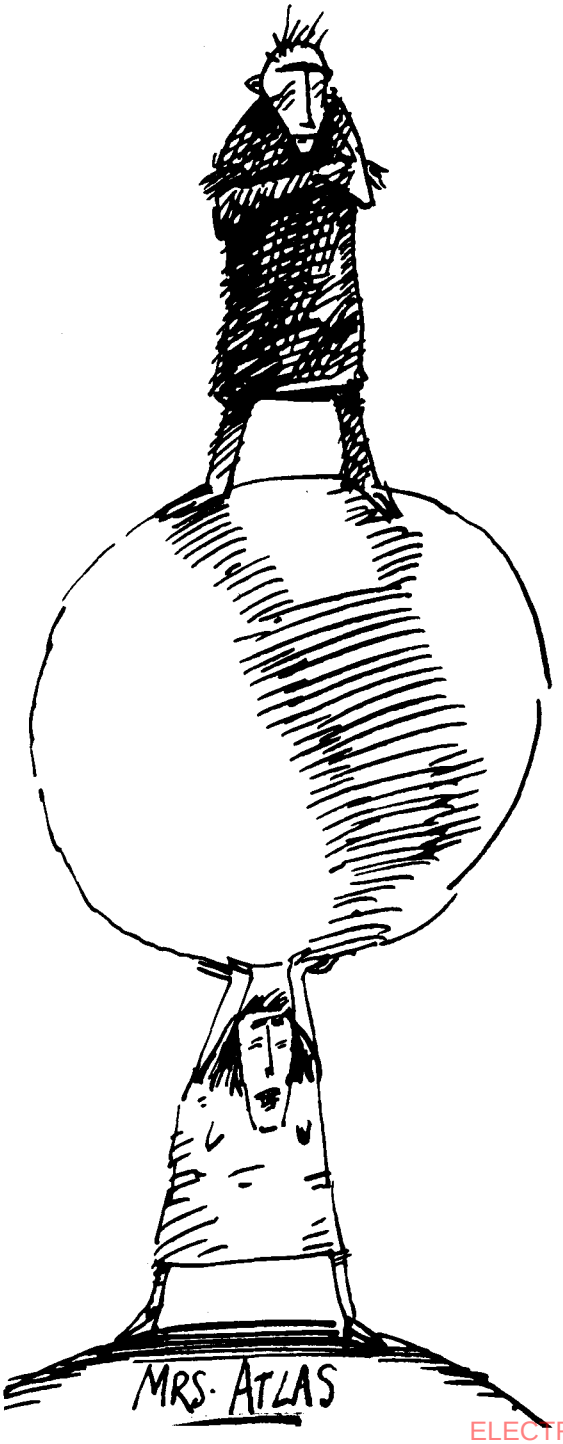
Lawrence & Wishart
39 Museum Street, London WC1A 1LQ

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Tories recognise the strength of feminist ideas, yet the Left has retreated from them.

Tricia Davis

Feminism is Dead? Long Live Feminism



SOME SECTIONS OF the Left have always regarded feminism as irrelevant to the working class. The defeats of the last four years have hardened attitudes and sharpened criticism. These attitudes have been linked to a view that Tory policies constitute an overthrow of any achievements which feminism might have claimed and that support for the Right expressed a reactionary shift in popular attitudes towards women. The argument concludes that the women's liberation movement (WLM) has been unable to challenge the Tories and to maintain its support. On the basis of this pessimism the call has gone out for a return to a pre-feminist fundamentalism. We are being urged to regard women's oppression as a sub-section of class oppression, ignore the sexual divisions within the working class and its organisations and invoke traditional class interests as the core around which a new socialist consensus can be built.

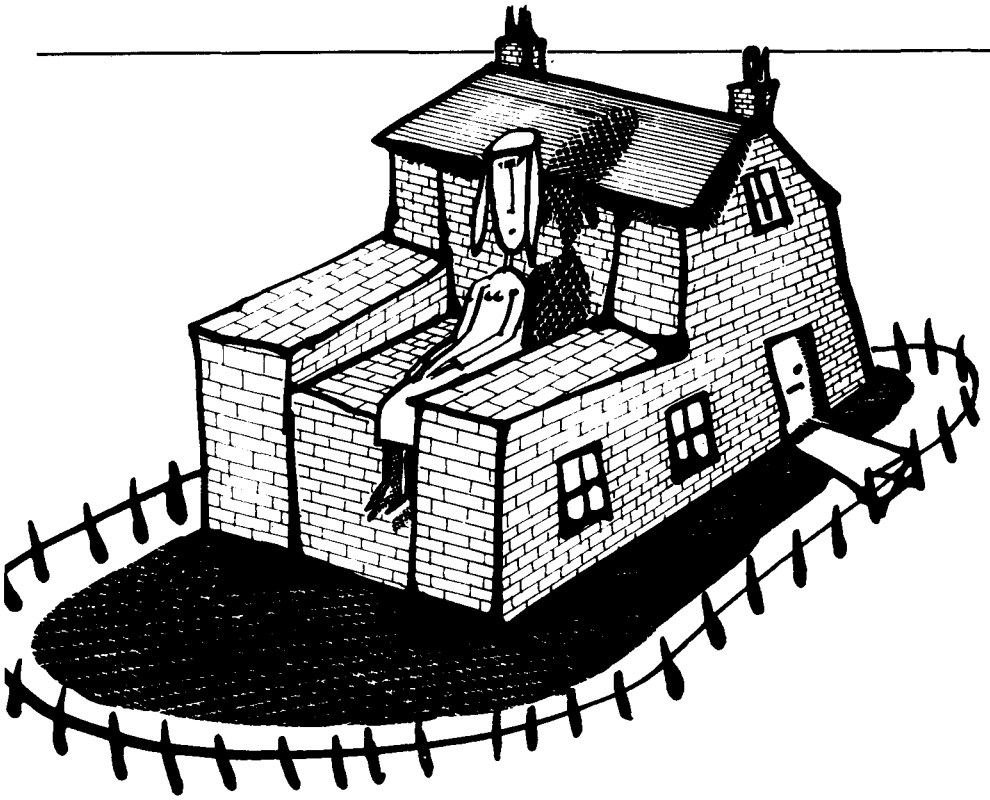
Feminism fell by the wayside first on the Trotskyist Left. At its 1981 conference the Socialist Workers Party disbanded its women's groups. The transmission belt, it appeared, was going in the wrong direction. Rather than feminists being enlightened by Trotskyism, half the comrades were becoming feminists. Within a year *Women's Voice*, the SWP's women's paper had sadly and silently disappeared. By contrast to the Trotskyist Left communism went further along the road towards feminism. The 1977 edition of the *British Road to Socialism*, the Communist Party's political programme, in understanding that women's oppression cannot totally be reduced to a class analysis made enormous progress in promoting the autonomous organisation of women. The Communist Party remains the only party on the Left with a serious and sophisticated commitment to feminism within its overall strategy.

This approach was barely tolerated by some in the Communist Party who clung to their class reductionist politics. This centres on a narrowly defined working class, a conservative definition of class interests and a projection of Eastern European socialism as the only 'true' and universally applicable model of progress. So absolute is their religious faith in this model that they are willing to absolve it from critical scrutiny and to remain silent even when women attempted to transform patriarchal relations within the constitutional framework of, for example, the GDR. At best the positive theoretical advances made by the Communist Party have been only cautiously implemented. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that feminism and feminists have become major targets for attack in the current ideological struggles within the CP.

The Labour Party also presents a far from happy picture. There are certainly signs that feminists have made an impact. The GLC and some other London boroughs have taken a positive approach, seeing feminism as a source of strength and ideas in their search for social policies which could inspire Labour's own declining base and the electorate more generally. Neil Kinnock's recent support for a family policy 'built upon the principle of extending real freedom of choice for and within the family', and his condemnation of the family wage (which assumes a male wage earner and dependent wife and children) may inaugurate a step forward within the Labour Party nationally.

The Labour Party itself, however, suffers from its own forms of fundamentalism. These derive either from a class reductionist Marxism, most consistently expressed by the Militant Tendency but with a wider basis of support, or from an untheorised and romantic attitude to the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



family and women's role within it. Although very different in origin, these views combine to produce a Labourist culture and politics which assumes that women and the family are identical. 'Labour,' claimed the Party's 1979 election address to women, 'is the Party which cares for the family and is committed to legislation to improve and maintain the stability of family life. It is the Party which understands the pressures on women upon whom the stability and contentment of family life depends.'

If the fundamentalist tradition within the British Left is ideologically opposed to feminism, the Labourist tradition is uncomprehending and incredulous.

The limits to reaction

On the surface it would seem that there has been a massive retreat from the peak of feminist aspiration in the 70s. This country has returned to government a party which, amongst other things, has eroded women's maternity rights, refused to act on pressure from the TUC and the Equal Opportunities Commission to improve the Equal Pay Act, made it more difficult for women to claim unemployment benefit, and cut the service sector on which thousands of women rely for support and in which women have traditionally been employed.

Yet, are things so simple? A recitation of the litany of these Tory crimes against women might be factually accurate and fuel *our* moral indignation. Can we assume, though, that support for the Tories implies a reaction against the ideals of women's liberation and that the working class share the attitude of one delegate to the 1982 NUR conference that 'there are only two places for women and one of them is the kitchen sink.'[1]

On the contrary, economic, demographic and social trends show that at the level of experience there is no mass retreat of women into the home and domestic subservience.

Feminism fell by the wayside first on the Trotskyist Left.

Unemployment amongst women *is* rising at an alarming rate. Job loss amongst women is particularly high in the service sector and in the manufacturing sector women are losing their jobs faster than men. Yet there is plenty of evidence of resistance to this trend both overtly as at Lee Jeans, Plessey's and in some of the public services, and covertly. Women are re-entering the workforce faster than men in the formal and the black economy. As Jean Gardiner has pointed out,[2] it is not so much that women are being forced back absolutely into the home; more to the point is that their rates of pay and working conditions are deteriorating. In spite of this the financial contribution of women to the home should not be underestimated. 400,000 women are now the sole wage earners because of their husband's unemployment.

There is no inevitable corollary, of course, between women's economic independence and other forms of self determination. It is possible for women to be wage-earners and still regard themselves as primarily wives and mothers, carrying the full burden of domestic responsibility. We can all quote instances, too, of calls for married women to return to the home so that men and young people can have their jobs. We have to ask, though, how many of those who argue that women should return to the home to ease the level of unemployment are ideologically committed to this view. How many see it as apparently the only solution to what may well seem like the intractable problem of unemployment? In other words, to what extent does it reflect hostility to women's equal participation in society? To what extent is it a result of economic recession and of the Left's failure to project an alternative to unemployment?

In the hard light of reality, it would be difficult to believe that in the context of mass unemployment and declining male wage rates, most women would be willing to abandon their paid employment and accept that their place is at the fireside.

Within the home it is also far from clear that women are colluding with Thatcher's appeal for a return to Victorian values. If past trends are anything to go by, women's increasing economic independence has not significantly weakened the popularity of marriage but has contributed to giving women a greater and more effective say in fixing the terms on which marriages are based. There are signs that this tendency is holding and even gathering momentum. During the last 15 years the number of divorces has grown: while a mere 2½% of couples married in 1969 were divorced within the first four years of marriage, for couples married in 1975 the figure was 5%. The substantial majority of divorces continue to be granted to women. There has also been an increase in the number of illegitimate births. A significant proportion of these were to women in their late 20s (33%) and 20s (10%) amongst whom we can assume that some at least made a positive choice of single parenthood.

At the sharp end of women's oppression by men, the National Women's Aid Federation have reported an increase in domestic violence. But what does this *mean*? A growth in reported domestic violence may reflect a return to aggressive forms of masculinity as male identity, for so long locked into the role of breadwinner,

[1] *Guardian* 21 July, 1982.

[2] Jean Gardiner in *The Politics of Thatcherism* ed S Hall and M Jacques, pp 188-207.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crumbles. More optimistically, however, it could also mean that there is a greater willingness amongst women to report domestic violence and an increased effectiveness of the Women's Aid Federation in providing an escape route for battered women and their children and in breaking the silence surrounding the battering of women.

There is, in short, no clear evidence to suggest a massive reaction against the ideals of women's liberation.

The women's liberation movement and female identities

No one would argue that feminism could claim all the credit for women's resistance in the present climate of recession. It has been more effective at changing the ecology of attitudes towards women but less so at transforming the total reality of most women's lives. Women's Aid Refuges, NHS abortion facilities, well-women clinics, Rape Crisis Centres and a revolution in medical practices in childbirth all owe something — and in some cases, everything — to feminism. But low pay, job segregation and inadequate facilities for the care of our children remain fundamental problems.

Feminism, however, has made women as a group socially and politically visible, and in a new way. Before 1968 women were addressed from within the political arena mainly as workers or in their domestic roles as wives, mothers and consumers. Some overlap within these roles was recognised, particularly by the Left. Socialists assumed, however, that within the workplace women's priorities should, or at least eventually would, be fundamentally the same as men's. The domestic was marginalised, either as a diversion from work based issues or as a natural and sub-political domain.

On this basis, women were a problem. The Left couldn't understand why women workers persistently refused to behave like their male colleagues and was often surprised and unsupportive when they did. The Right was highly critical or totally dismissive of women's paid work.

It was the WLM which broke down these divisions between the areas of women's experience which had made women so incomprehensible to the Left and so reprehensible to the Right. It did this by the simple but novel expedient of addressing women firstly as women, by recognising the validity of women's desire for individual autonomy, and an acceptance of the value of an involvement in the domestic world.

In addition feminism suggested that it should no longer be necessary for women to face the choice of a family or a career, to emulate a male model of achievement by putting into abeyance one side of their lives. A radical and immediate way for women to cut through the tensions created by their two roles was for men to take their share, collectively and individually, of responsibility for domestic labour.

This had a resonance which went far beyond the core of feminist activists and gave women a political and social identity which the Left and the trade union movement should envy on behalf of their own constituencies. This identity has been maintained despite the recession and is reflected in some surprising ways even within Tory politics.

Negotiating with the moral Right

In making an assessment of Tory strategy towards women, much has been made on the Left of Margaret Thatcher's statement that 'the battle for women's rights has been largely won'[3] and her claims that women now want a reassertion of traditional values.

As a backdrop to this, feminists and the Left have watched in horror as feminist advances in the United States have been rolled back, as in the case of abortion rights, or held in check by the campaign to prevent the adoption of the modest Equal Rights Amendment. Thatcher's presidential style of electioneering has encouraged us to imagine that her word is an automatic fiat. Left paranoia about the US induces the assumption that it is only a matter of time before trends there are repeated in this country.

These assumptions need unravelling. The carefully orchestrated projection of Thatcher's hardline image is one thing. Tory policy is quite another. And those who manage the Tory machine, including Thatcher herself, know this very well. The bizarre contortions of Tory behaviour during the recent hanging debate, when Thatcher herself voted for the pro-hanging motions whilst the party machinery worked against them, should teach us at least that lesson. What Margaret wants Margaret doesn't always get and sometimes knows she can't have.

We should also be equally careful to distinguish between the political climate in the US and that here. Even in the United States the anti-feminist backlash may not be quite so certain of its ground as it has sometimes seemed. One of Reagan's appointees has recently resigned as head of a task force investigating sexually discriminating legislation. Reagan has had to persuade the Republican Party to appoint his feminist daughter to advise him on how to 'create a dialogue' between women and the Republican administration. This takes place against the more general problem facing the Reagan administration; the unpopularity of Reagan's policies amongst women is growing and there is even dissent amongst the party's own loyalists. But in the United States the Moral Majority is an important political force. Here it is more diffuse, idiosyncratic and divided.

These divisions in Britain are especially acute on the subject of the family, that heartland of feminist struggle and female experience. Some right wing ideologues and pressure groups such as the National Association For Freedom wish to extend state power to bolster the family against what they see as the major problem of sexual permissiveness. Others, including Ferdinand Mount, the influential author of *The Subversive Family,* formerly a journalist on the *Spectator* and the *Daily Mail* and advisor to the Prime Minister, see intervention in the domestic arena as breaking the Tory promise to roll back the frontiers of the welfare state and as betraying the libertarian tradition within Conservative philosophy. In his book Mount has argued that if Nazism and Communism have been the enemies of the traditional family in the past, its most immediate enemies now are the welfare state professionals who are violating the privacy of the working class home.

> The Right is not sufficiently clear to mount a major offensive against feminism.

Abortion

By contrast, LIFE, a major pressure group within the British moral Right and one which is supported by the Catholic Church and parts of the medical establishment, is invoking another group of professionals as the guardians of moral values. LIFE activists argue that doctors should intervene to oppose parents who reject life-saving operations for babies born with serious disabilities.

That 'the rights of the child' override all other considerations is a view shared by the other major anti-abortion pressure group, the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. Writing in *The Church Times,* Margaret White, a leading SPUC activist, commented 'all those involved (at the birth of a disabled child) accept that the attitude of the parents determines whether such

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

children are allowed to live or not . . . No woman is in a fit state to make an important decision within hours of giving birth.'[4]

On the issue of abortion, too, both SPUC and LIFE agree that there is a need for greater state intervention to restrict access to abortion facilities. However, whilst the majority on the Left and within the WLM would regard this position as typical of right wing attitudes, the reality is far more complicated. Keith Joseph would prefer to maintain present abortion facilities fearing that the alternative would be 'irresponsible parenthood' which fed into 'the cycle of deprivation', a sharp reminder that pro-abortion arguments can be reactionary and based on eugenics and a belief in racial hygiene. More positively the Young Conservatives have put forward the case for liberalising existing abortion legislation on grounds which are feminist. The motion passed at this year's Young Conservative conference stated that 'abortion should be a matter of personal choice for the woman concerned' and called upon parliament 'to enact legislation to realise this situation.'[5]

Anti-abortionists have also tried to link their arguments to feminism by suggesting that women's choice often masks male pressure. But even when there is no attempt to appropriate feminism we cannot assume that hostility to the extension of abortion facilities can be linked to other reactionary attitudes. Writing about a recent anti-abortion rally, for example, Martin Durham has pointed out[6] that one speaker claimed that just as one should oppose the bomb so one should oppose abortion, an argument which must have found some resonance amongst the young people attending the event wearing their CND badges and those who were distributing disarmament leaflets.

The conclusion we can draw from this picture of confusion is that the Right, at least as yet, is not sufficiently clear of its own direction to mount a major offensive against feminism. The Tories, far from having a united right wing constituency to which they can refer, are negotiating with a variety of ideological positions. Not least, they have to consider their own women activists on whom the Conservative Party, like all political parties, is extremely dependent. The stereotype of the Tory woman with a highly traditional view of women's role may very well reflect reality in some cases. There are Tory women, however, with careers, including political careers, who are unlikely to welcome a simplistic call for women to return to the home.

The Tories have an understanding of the complex reality of women's lives and the new space which women occupy because of feminism which is much more sophisticated than the Left gives them credit for. On the basis of this understanding, they have developed a strategy towards women which is cautious but subtle.

Tory politics: the hold of individualism

The present government has limited opportunities for women through several pieces of legislation. In addition, by suggesting that there are areas of domestic life which should be removed altogether from state intervention, the Tories have gone some way towards justifying lack of government spending on welfare provision. Patrick Jenkin, commenting on divorce legislation for example, claimed that 'we move onto difficult ground if we argue that the government should take responsibility for, or even try to directly influence, how people live their lives.'[7] This reticence was reflected too in the Conservative election manifesto. Despite the panic caused by leaks from the Family Policy Group some weeks before, which had suggested that the Tories were shifting rapidly into a more interventionist approach to the family, the manifesto turned out to be extremely cautious. 'It is not for the government to try to dictate how men and women organise their lives', the manifesto maintained, 'our approach is to help people and their families fulfil their aspirations in a rapidly changing world.'

However, whilst exploring how far people are prepared to go along with the dismantling of the welfare state, the Tories are not presenting this crudely. They are also being careful to distinguish it from a denial of equal opportunities. Their method of achieving both this subtlety and this differentiation is to place welfare cuts and equal opportunities within the context of an ideal which has enormous leverage. The ideal is that of individual responsibility and the right to control one's own life. It is a heady doctrine and one which keeps alive the possibility of human dignity. In other words, the Tories are elevating the whole issue of morality within the political agenda. This was made clear by Geoffrey Finsberg as Under Secretary of State for Social Services when he said that he did not see it as the state's job to say that parents of young children should or should not work. This is the parents' decision. But we should recognise their responsibility for their children's welfare when making that decision.'[8]

Patrick Jenkin, again, whilst Tory Secretary of State for Social Services, also encapsulated this strategy of setting the right of women to equal opportunity alongside an appeal to a genuine parental concern about their children's well-being and women's self respect within their parental role: 'there is now an elaborate machinery to ensure equal opportunity, equal pay, and equal rights. But I think we ought to stop and ask: where does that leave the family? . . . The pressure on young wives to go out to work devalues motherhood itself . . . Parenthood is a very skilled task indeed, and it must be our aim to restore it to the place of honour it deserves.'[9]

The Left has accused the present government of fostering selfishness in contrast to the socialist ideal of solidarity. In the long run this may be the case. As the

[3] *The Times* 27 July 1982.
[4] *Church Times* 4 December 1981.
[5] ALRA *Bulletin* spring 1983.
[6] Martin Durham *The Chartist* October-November 1983.
[7] *The Future of Marriage* Conservative Political Centre 1982.
[8] *Hansard* 4 November 1981.
[9] Quoted in J Coussins and A Coote *The Family in the Firing Line* 1981.

THE
COMING WOMAN
MUST BE
BEAUTIFUL.
The fashionable "fad" is Physical Culture for Women. If you can't belong to a gymnasium, have one at home. Special work for ladies and invalids designed by a well-known physician. You can lift a ton a minute without fatigue, and become graceful and handsome. Send stamp for illustrated pamphlets, "How we Trained Our Children," "How to Cure Disease by Exercise," "How to Get Strong."
STAR EXERCISER CO.
710 Broadway, N. Y.
26/1885-1890
Bound hand and foot to household drudgery, scrubbing and rubbing day in and day out, doing your cleaning in the hard old-fashioned way—woman, why do you do it? Break away and use
GOLD DUST
Washing Powder
This famous cleanser has proven the emancipation of thousands of other women—why not yours? Let GOLD DUST do more of the work, you do more of the play. For greatest economy buy our large package.
Manufacturers also of Fairy Soap
THE N. K. FAIRBANK COMPANY
Chicago. St. Louis. New York. Boston. Philadelphia
ASCOUGH'S
WE WILL MAIL OUR BABY FOR $1
...YOUR MONEY BACK IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT...
THE CUTEST, MOST WONDERFUL

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long term implications of Tory policies unfold life is likely to be easy only for those who can meet their domestic needs independently of the state. In that bleaker climate moral issues may very well fall by the wayside. For the present, however, it is to those values which the Tories speak so persuasively and on which the Left is criminally silent.

Where do we go from here?

The moral confirmation which the Tories are offering is no substitute over time for practical support. In fact, there are signs that women, whose domestic responsibilities bring them closer to the contradictions in Tory policy, are shifting their allegiance from the Tories more rapidly than men. The gender gap has been reversed in British politics so that it is now men who are more likely to support the Right. In 1983, however, it was not Labour, but the Alliance which benefited from women's changing voting patterns. Amongst women there was a swing of 21% to the Alliance and 12.5% of this was *from* a Labour Party which up until now has tried to reduce feminism to formal equality. The question is endless, but it needs asking; what is to be done?

It would be wrong to be too pessimistic about our prospects for changing this picture. Feminist advance during the last four years has certainly been less spectacular than in the earlier part of the 70s but important ground has nonetheless been held. Up until now it is the Tories that have recognised this. They have addressed themselves to the problems which feminism has raised about the practical and emotional tensions caused by women's dual role and the relationship between the individual and wider society.

Against this background, it is difficult to see the logic of the Left's retreat from feminism since class reductionism has consistently downgraded the individual and the moral terrain. What the Left needs, on the contrary, is to learn that socialism can no longer ignore questions of morality or submerge the individual within solidarity. It needs to develop a strategy which is more informed by feminism's insights into these areas. For feminists the task must be to find the structures through which we can promote our insights and to give them a coherence as a programme for change. The components for achieving this are already there.

Organisationally, divisions within feminism have been debilitating during the last four years. They have broken our hearts, undermined our individual resilience and our sense of ourselves as a movement. The sectarian tendency to organise around our differences, rather than the problems women face in a wider social context, has led to unproductive speculation, reminiscent of left sectarianism, about which tendency holds the kernel of ideological purity and which group of women is most oppressed. Within these debates sisterhood has often been submerged in bitter sibling rivalry. Sadly this has kept or driven women out of the movement into individualised politics or their own political party. We have to accept that the movement of the 70s no longer exists.

Here the moral Right is more diffuse, idiosyncratic and divided.

However, the difficulties that the women's movement has faced are not a reason nor is this the time for feminists to lose our nerve. In 1968 one of the main motivating forces of feminism was against the exclusion of women from public power and feminism from British politics. That is no longer the case. Feminism is working in the trade union and labour movement in the shape of individuals and in women's groups and committees. Many of the single issue campaigns developed by the women's movement in the 70s continue. Feminism indeed can now be described as an alliance around a commitment to end the oppression of women. This alliance needs to be developed and extended.

Feminist alternative

In the feminist alternative economic strategy there is an important base from which to develop a programme which recognises that people are both economically rational and emotionally complex. Anna Coote, for example, has put forward the case[10] for reconstructing the economy around the importance of caring for our children and more generally. She has argued that this should not only involve institutional care but also recognise people's individual commitment to their children. A feminist economic strategy therefore must involve a revitalisation of public services but also shorter working hours for men and women, an end to the family wage and an increase in child benefit and other care allowances.

This version of the alternative economic strategy stands out from other models proposed by the Left for its ability to occupy the moral terrain. It makes sense in other ways too. We are living in a society in which the traditional nuclear family is now only 5% of the population. It is a society in which women, as carers, are already overburdened, not only because of cuts in services, but also because we care from a sense of love and loyalty. It is a society in which there can be no simple return to full employment or previous employment patterns. The service sector now increasingly dominates the workforce and a process has taken place which has restructured a great deal of British industry along capital intensive lines. This trend will continue as new technology is introduced. Investment no longer necessarily means jobs.

In such a society an alternative economic strategy which restructures our working day, week, year and life around this concept of caring is the only one which makes sense. Like the feminist concept of alliances, the feminist economic strategy will have to be developed. The arguments for it will have to be made on an understanding of feminism if women are to benefit. Previously when working hours have been cut, overtime has increased and men have done more paid work. To some men too shorter working hours have meant more free time for themselves. We must make it clear that we are not campaigning for more free time and better wage rates for men, in this instance, but for a principle of egalitarianism; equal access to employment for women, equal domestic responsibility for men and equal contact with both parents for children.

Within this campaign for the feminist alternative the pervasive problem of low pay can no longer be avoided. It will have to be confronted to prevent cuts in the overall standard of living and to under-cut a drift into greater overtime working caused by low pay. Lastly we will have to distinguish our programme from the proposals of those who identify present unemployment with desirable leisure. Higher benefits for all unemployed and unwaged people, free access to leisure and educational facilities, and the rights of part-time workers must be added to our demands.

The Right is powerful but not monolithic. It is riding the crest of a wave but it is not invincible. At the moment it has the monopoly of the moral terrain as far as domestic issues are concerned. This arena, however, is not irretrievably lost to socialism. If feminism can be asserted at the political heart of a socialist solution to the present political crisis, women can win not only on our behalf but also on behalf of the working class. □

[10] Anna Coote 'The AES: a new starting point' *New Socialist* November-December 1981.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Interview with David Yip
The Chinese Detective

Interview by Alan Clarke

How did the idea of the *Chinese Detective* come about?

It started off like all the usual ones do. Ian Kennedy Martin, the writer, is very well known as a crime writer — he created *The Sweeney, Juliet Bravo* and he wrote some of *Z Cars*. To be totally honest he was looking for a new angle on the same theme. Originally he thought of a black detective but found the idea a bit daunting because he felt that, because of the racial situation, to have a black detective you'd always have to have this face-to-face confrontation like *Walcott*. I thought the acting was good and the guy who played the part fine but I didn't like the way they set it all up.

The problem was sustaining that confrontation?

That's right. He wasn't a black man, he was white in many ways. So Kennedy Martin decided against the black detective. What happened was that he met a girl from Liverpool — a half-Chinese girl — who was talking about the problems of being from two cultures and being brought up in the dominant one — the white culture. There is always this thing inside you which strikes an odd chord now and again. Anyway that got his mind ticking and he decided 'well why not try a chinese detective' and have him fully Chinese. I decided that he was actually born here: so he's brought up a sort of East End lad but in a Chinese family. And his family were slightly unorthodox in that they weren't in the catering trade.

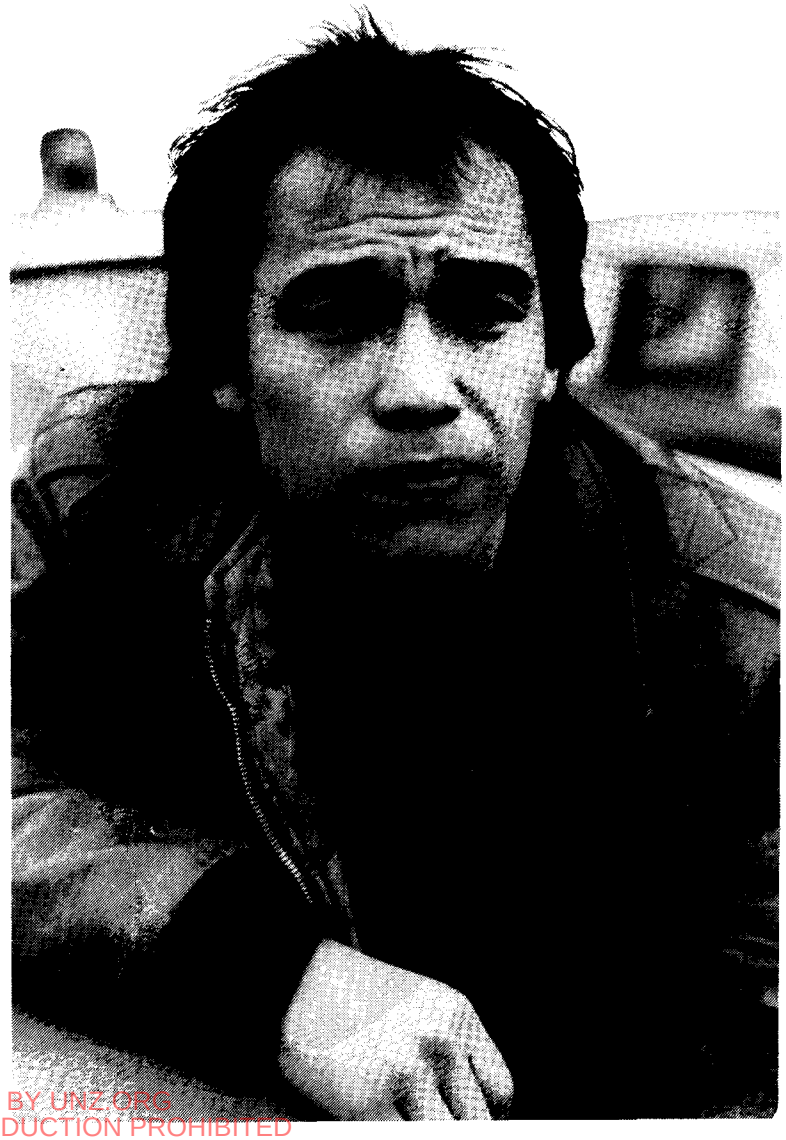
To star in your own television series is fantastic but what was exciting for me about the Chinese Detective is that the character was everything that I'm about in a sense. We're not the same but the character is very much like me if slightly more immature. You've got this nice situation where you've got a hero — and to all intents and purposes that's what he is — he's a hero to be emulated and adored. But he's not the sort of big macho character and equally he's not a soppy liberal because he is a policeman after all. There's got to be something in your mentality that makes you want to be a policeman. That was the most difficult part for me — I couldn't work out just how I was going to be a policeman. You see historically the Chinese have always been the softest racial group if you like; soft in two senses. They are very gentle people anyway, very unassuming and very inward, but still, when they come face-to-face with the white community, they clash. It's a softness only because they've never gone out to win the community. They did their own thing, they cooked their own food, they lived their own lives and it was the host who came in and said 'hey I like that' and restaurants grew. Everyone has a favourite Chinese they can pat on the head and they frequent their restaurants or whatever.

How do you feel about the other characters in the series?

It was possible to have the character like Inspector Berwick who I wouldn't say was an out-and-out racist, but was obviously a bit of a racist, if you like, your usual working class stereotype. Do you know what I mean by that? He was more annoyed with Ho because he upset his routine. In his backwater Berwick's got as high as he's going to get and he will remain there serving out his time until he gets his pension. And no problems, he's got a decent record but not exceptional. Ho's totally unorthodox: he starts rattling the bones and what one has to assume is that at the end of every episode there's an awful lot of paper work somewhere and this usually end's up on Berwick's desk.

It's part of what the series is about as well, trying to create that sort of natural atmosphere.

Yes. You see when they first started filming it, it wasn't written so much. The first time the Chinese Detective goes in to flash his identity card, he'd say, 'Detective Sergeant Ho' and no one would bat an eyelid. If a detective came to your door — a Chinese guy and



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said I'm a Detective Sergeant — you actually would panic, especially if he was a bit small. So we used that and in the end we decided to write that reaction into the script and I think it's totally valid. Politically I think Ho was a Labour supporter but he must have had hard tendencies as well to be a policeman.

You were talking about the handling of racism in the programme. It is quite an easy handling of racism.

I think it shows the East End as it is. It's like Liverpool you see. It's that dock area: people are so used to having immigrants and foreigners around that, on the one hand you have a total acceptance. I was brought up with Chinese and Indians. And on the other hand you have people who'll never accept it, hence the National Front presence up there. I think we showed this to a certain extent in the series. It sounds as though I'm apologising and defending the thing. I don't. I regard it for what it is really — it was a police series after all. It wasn't out to be a social documentary. On the other hand, accepting the genre, it actually made a bit of ground in a positive way as opposed to just grabbing an audience.

Did you have any help from the police in creating the series?

The police are very funny, because when you start making a series like that they go through a routine thing at first. We were very unusual because we refused to have a police adviser. They could have turned around and said 'well, the guy's under regulation height' and that sort of thing. We wanted to avoid all that. We felt this was necessary because Ho is so unorthodox in his approach and his politics. He's open about his politics, we didn't want them homing in on that and bogging us down while we tried to resolve the unresolvable. So we turned down a police adviser. We also lost, in that case, my chance to go round police stations but I didn't find that a drawback because anyone can pick up a radio and tell you how to say 'foxglove Charlie' or whatever you say on the radio. What I did was read a lot and the book that I really got a great deal from was *Spike Island*.

The Chinese Detective *is much better at presenting the police routine than say something like* The Sweeney, *but how do you think the viewers react to the series?*

The Sweeney is purely about getting to an audience who are used to action every second, American-style, with guns going off etc. That's really why we should never have gone out on BBC1 at all. We are really a BBC2 programme. I was watching clips of *Out* and that's stunning. I know it went out on ITV first but it's in its right place now on Channel 4 because it's not a cops and robbers series. It's actually six very good plays about a man who has been in prison.

Generally the police reaction has been one of great fun. Thank god I haven't been invited to policeman's balls, as some do, but I get a very friendly reaction from them. They take it all with a pinch of salt. But they like some of its reality. The low keyness, the frustration when the bureaucracy gets in the way or bureaucracy fucks something up.

Is there a third series?

I don't think so. I'm very lucky because I'm very busy at the moment and also I'm a little worried about being typecast. I mean whether you do two or three series I'm now the Chinese Detective in some people's eyes. But it doesn't matter as I think we've got to the end of the series as it is constructed. The BBC is still considering a third series but quite honestly because money is dodgy at the moment I think they will be looking for something a bit more glamorous. I would be in two minds — we could do it and expand it a bit more, that would be interesting, we would have to move somewhere, to take the central characters like Berwick and Chegwin and whatever and move them somewhere else, somehow. But quite honestly I'd like to try and do something else, I think it's always possible to resurrect the *Chinese Detective*. I'm not knocking it, it's been great for me, I stand by it and am very proud actually but I want to do other things as an actor.

Did you find the series difficult to sustain?

Looking back, the first series was murder. Most actors anyway have a bumpy time of it. But for me it really was a question of getting a chance as an actor, instead of just being offered walk on parts as a Chinese waiter. I suffered as a lot of ethnic minority

actors do — that they can go for months, years in fact taking small parts and then something huge comes along because a writer has either written a part which suits them down to the ground or some enlightened director has given them a lead. And more often than not they fail in wider terms, although they may gain something for themselves and that's what I felt about the *Chinese Detective*. I was suddenly thrust in there and, I enjoyed it, I learnt a lot, I didn't think it was too disastrous. But when I look at the repeats I can see as an actor how I could go back and do them all differently. In the second series I was able to do that and that's why I was so glad to do it and there's still a lot to learn.

What is the most important thing the series has taught you?

I've been given this terrific opportunity of having 14 hours of television but the wonderful thing about starring in this series is that when you go out the door the camera goes with you, you are the focus of the programme. Before, I used to go out the door and they closed the door and that was it. That's the ultimate dream when the camera follows you, and you learn by that, you see and you build up this relationship with your director and the camera people. In the first series I was far too nervous every day just getting there and I worried too much about the technical side of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

production. So I've learnt an awful lot and I'm sure if I did a third series I'd do more but I'd like to gain that experience by doing something else.

You talked there about the casting problems for ethnic minority actors. There doesn't seem to have been much improvement in that?

Well, I've been an actor for ten years. I left drama school in 1973, but ever since I left I've been involved with my union and specifically with these problems. The old argument is that talent will out. That's not true at all. The general rule has been a great neglect. We're in a business which is supposed to be terribly liberal and yet I feel that we, ethnic minority actors, suffer through the so-called liberalism of the profession. So you can get a situation such as that at the National Theatre when it first opened and they were doing Tamberlaine. We asked for a meeting with Peter Hall and we met the full board of the theatre. Peter Hall was in the middle of rehearsing and came in and said you can have 20 minutes or whatever. We gave our speech — you know we feel that the National Theatre represents the nation. . . and we notice that in your company there aren't any non-white actors — and he made a statement, one of many, justifying his stand. One of the things he did say, which still amazes me today, is 'well you know I wouldn't insult a non-white actor by asking him to do something as menial as hold a spear . . .!' It's that mentality, when a guy like that, who's not a racist and would say that he supports integrated casting, would talk the right talk and yet uses these sorts of arguments when it comes to their own production.

Do you think audiences will reject drama with non-white actors in the leading roles?

People will accept. We are in a make-believe world and I believe as an audience you make a contribution when you buy your ticket. You are paying to be entertained. You enter into a disbelief so that when the curtain rises you see a set, and, for example, if it's the *Tempest*, you are told of the magical island, you believe for three hours. You accept a white man playing a black man in *Othello* — why is it so wrong for me to play at the Young Vic in Shakespearean roles. I played Benvolio in *Romeo and Juliet*. Sure, for the first couple of minutes people are surprised. But it's no more surprising than when I see a woman bus driver or an Indian with a turban as a traffic warden.

Is the mainstream theatre improving in this respect?

It is slowly. The fringe is helping an awful lot. If they can do what they've done for women for ethnic minorities then they're on a winner — and they're thinking about it. What happened basically was that women got together, they got women playwrights and directors, and they've done it! There is some wonderful stuff coming out of the fringe and they are very aware of the situation: when they advertise they say we are an equal opportunities employer and we support integrated casting. In fact, they've found a completely different problem with many younger ethnic minority actors. If they advertise for a Chinese guy, or a black girl to tour with a company for 26 weeks on good pay (I mean good for theatre, say about £120), they get kids applying who are used to working not in the theatre but rather doing odd bits on TV or commercials and earning maybe a better wage. They turn their nose up at £120 and don't think of the experience. So there are two sides to it.

Has Equity supported this drive?

Well yes. I also belong to a breakaway group called Campaign for Equal Opportunities in the Arts which is open to anyone who works in the arts: administrators, actors, writers, journalists even. Most of us worked in Equity, and still do, but we found that we came up against the bureaucracy of Equity. Basically Equity was run by a right wing group for a long time and we were supposed to be non-political. They have had an integrated policy in Equity since about 1963/4 and every year they voice the attitudes but they've never done anything about it. Contracts with the BBC have never been made to support the policy of integrated casting. We decided that we had to lose the restraint of Equity, to be able to make our own stand. The idea is to be a pressure group so that if we suddenly find that theatres aren't using non-white actors, we can put pressure on them. Our membership isn't huge but it's growing, and we are now currently recognised within the arts world and the race relations world.

Where did the idea for this group come from?

All of us took part in the report on ethnic minorities in televison. We on the Afro-Asian committee of Equity initiated that report and at the end of it, we had a good report which took us three years to do and we knew Equity were going to sit on it. That's one of the reasons that we formed then, because it had had an impact. The BBC had been shaken up a bit. With me they tried to push the Chinese bit. I was there when they were doing the press interviews for the launch of the *Chinese Detective* and I made sure I said the programme was a wonderful asset for integrated casting, but it wasn't the be-all and end-all.

But the problem goes beyond one series.

That's right — and it's got to be behind camera as well. It's all very well using black actors or even newsreaders but its got to be the mentality of the casting and the organisation of the programmes that is changed. It must apply to secretaries, producers and camera people as well. You see basically the organisation is a middle-class white outfit.

It's the argument that the women's movement have used, particularly around Thames, to good effect. The pressures that they've exerted there have resulted in sizeable changes, haven't they?

Yes, it's getting there. The whole thing is about monitoring. I used to be anti-monitoring but I feel now that it's got to happen because you've got to know what you're talking about.

You're obviously politically active in the Labour Party. Is that something that's developed out of your involvement in the union?

No, I've always been aware because I come from Liverpool. I'm not a politican or a theoretician. Basically I'm a socialist and left of centre I suppose, although I find it very difficult these days. I get a bit confused. I am a socialist because, as I say, I come from Liverpool and I've seen right up-front the hardship of a working class family, a very poor working class family. I have six brothers, two of whom are university graduates, and at one time they were all unemployed. All right they have just spent one million pounds relining the streets of Toxteth with trees and putting all this wonderful gravel down, but either side of it are slums. Now, it's true Labour governments didn't do much better, but at least they did try to organise health care and all that. I'm very simple in my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

politics because I believe that everyone has the right to good housing, education and health. I am an anti-capitalist in a sense but I think I'm willing to live within it. It's more of a gut reaction than a theory.

Surely a gut reaction is one of the best reasons for one's politics?

Yes. You see people keep saying 'being an actor and being involved with politics is dangerous'. But it isn't. Certainly ten years ago it was more difficult, much more difficult. But I always felt that because I am a TV personality and therefore known to a fair amount of people, that I should use that. I get particularly annoyed by my fellow professionals who actually say 'well, you know, we're not involved in politics we're artists and actors'. I've never understood that attitude; it angers me, because in a sense we're the paupers of the world. We will always need money for the arts. Even socialist governments don't actually put it high on their list of priorities although they put it in their manifestos.

So you see a direct role for actors in politics then?

I belive that if people watch a good performance, even a good play on television, it can actually revive spirits. We can make people angry, make them laugh and make them cry. We have great power and, in the old days, they used it well. Shakespeare's plays are full of propaganda. So I've always felt as an actor that I have a very important role to play, not as an agitator, but just because of what I do. I'm happy for people to identify me as a socialist for example. I've spoken on demonstrations, I supported the Labour election campaign. And I do it purely because it's a gut reaction and I believe that what's happening now is wrong and is wrong because it's hurting people. There are a lot more young actors, writers, directors, who are politically aware and willing to say so today. In the old days it was very much the old boy network and you had to be careful what you said.

Putting yourself as a personality on the line is interesting. Do you think there's any contradiction between you as a person going on a demonstration and the sort of politics that the character might represent — in some people's minds you are the Chinese Detective?

Oh no. I make it very clear when I speak at demonstrations or meetings I'm there as me, I'm speaking as me and I'm speaking because I want to speak. The personality side comes in when they want to use your name for pulling people in, they used something in the election. To me that's valid. I mean all right, you've got a commodity and you use it. And if people want to come and listen to David Yip talking about the party, then the silly buggers will come. *Arts for Labour* really took off with the election because we decided we didn't just want to be supporters at election time, when you are trundled out and you know there has been no preparation. We want to be much more active, versatile in the party, and not just open bazaars. You've got to give it to the Conservatives. They stage managed things and, whether we like it or not, we are in the presidential style of election now and it's all about show business. The Labour Party is still terrified of show business: they still think it's somehow unholy and they still want to stand on their soap box and talk to people. And it isn't about that at all.

What you are saying is that it is all about communication.

I kept saying to them 'its no good us putting ourselves on a

Collet's

COLLET'S LONDON BOOKSHOP
64-66 Charing Cross Road London WC2

Collets London Bookshop — The country's oldest established socialist bookshop. Next year we celebrate our 50th anniversary. The shop reflects the growth in the world's socialist movement with sections on the Third World, Ireland, Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, sociology, economics, philosophy, Marxist classics, criticism, feminism, gay politics, fiction, the media, disarmament, and a second hand department.

The following books would be of great interest to students:

Marx and Engels **The German Ideology, students edition £2.50 pbk, published by Lawrence and Wishart**
Andre Gunder Frank **Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America £3.75 pbk Monthly Review Press**
Stuart Hall and others **Policing the Crisis £6.95 pbk Macmillan**
Walter Benjamin **Understanding Brecht £3.95 RKP**
Dale Spender **Man Made Language £4.95 pbk RKP**
E P Thompson **The Making of the English Working Class £4.95 pbk Penguin**
Anthony Giddens **Central Problems in Social Theory £5.95 pbk Macmillans**
plus an extensive range of newspapers, magazines and pamphlets

Shop open;
Mon, Tues, Weds 10am — 6.30pm
Thurs 10am — 7pm
Fri 10.30pm — 7pm
Sat 10am — 6pm

Telephone 01-836 6306
Send cheques, postal orders or book tokens to the above address

Please allow 50p per book for post and package, or £2 for 5 books or more.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

platform, or certainly me, and asking me to talk convincingly about policies, about theory or socialism and all that'. The MPs who come round speak better. Actors trade on words and we are there as the rabble rousers and let's be quite honest about it. Why aren't the Union Jacks on the walls? I mean the Conservative Party have taken over the Union Jack and to the working man and woman in the street, the Union Jack symbolises the country. It was just simple things like that. At one of the election meetings I attended they had a tacky picture of Michael Foot up. It was sort of stuck there at an angle behind him. It sounds many miles away from politics but it isn't. But for example Howard Brenton the playwright wrote one of the *Arts for Labour* leaflets in the last general election. *Arts for Labour* is growing rapidly. Scores of designers, musicians and writers, who may not be well known, are eager to promote the Labour Party properly.

Were any of them used?

Yes. They weren't used nationally, they had to be asked for. They were supplied by *Arts for Labour*, paid for by the Labour Party, but they were the best selling pamphlets used. We appeared on leaflets with the candidates photograph and name. They found that went more quickly than the normal handout. That's blatant commercialism but that's what it's about and it made people pick them up.

Do you think all actors should maintain the same distance as youself from policy details?

I think people like Colin Welland, Miriam Karlin, Prunella Scales and Glenda Jackson are very good speakers indeed. Now if they can do that, fine, but I think more people are like me. I was at one meeting where you got a very good candidate speaking, then you got someone like Foot or Shore who really spoke very well, and then you are expected to speak. I found in the end that the best thing you could do was talk on a very personal level and tell them why you're a socialist. Labour supporters there actually came up and said 'I'm amazed, you're on the telly and you vote Labour', that's why I say it's important to be seen.

Now that you are a personality and the BBC have invested a certain amount of time and money in you, what sort of pressures are there to continue along a stardom road?

I am a television personality and it's very different from being a star of stage and screen. I mean I'm only known to people who watch telly or read *Marxism Today*. If I did a *Coronation Street* my mum's day would be made. But when the *Chinese Detective* happened to me that paid back to my parents a huge debt when the series began. I was on the front of the *Radio Times* and my mother literally walked around with it under her bloody arm and used to accost strangers in the street and say, 'you know, that's my son. Are you going to watch this?' I'd be a liar to say I find it too much. I mean it's actually quite nice to be recognised and I've never had anyone being horrible to me or violent. I do believe it's part of the job you see. I think when you take on something like the *Chinese Detective*, when you put yourself up front, when you sign a contract, you are signing into a certain amount of public life. I believe if I'm sitting in a restaurant and someone comes up to me and says 'can I have your autograph' I have an obligation to sign. I have no obligation after that to sit down and have a drink with them or hear their life story or even tell them my life story. □

Are you a philosopher who wishes not only to interpret the world but to change it?
Did you cry when Warren Beatty died at the end of "Reds"?
Is your grant so small you can't afford the final six volumes of Marx's collected works?
Are you alienated from your student union?
Do you want an alternative to social democratic stodge and Trotskyite tantrums?
Have you sensed a SPECTRE haunting your campus?
Do you think Communists drive tanks?
Why not contact COMMUNIST STUDENTS and find out the truth about us and our new journal the SPECTRE?A postage stamp to lose but a world to win!

I want to join/find out more about the Communist Party.

Name:

Address:

Send to: CP Students, 16 St John St, London EC1M 4AY. Tel: 01-251 4406

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thatcherism is the greatest danger confronting the Left and we need a strategy which faces up to that.

Dave Priscott

Popular Front Revisited

IT WAS predictable that the right-wing reaction to Labour's general election setback would be a call to return to right-wing leaders and policies. This would be the road to disaster. Labour's electoral decline began in the days of right-wing domination of the movement, and the right wing (Callaghan for example) continued through the election campaign to damage Labour's prospects.

More fundamentally, we are in a period of continuing capitalist crisis which does not provide the same possibilities as existed in the years of relative boom for those 'concessions' to working people that were the basis of the 'consensus politics' practised by right-wing Labour and Tory politicians in those years.

Reactions to the election defeat on the left of the movement are more mixed. There is a very understandable determination not to retreat from the advances won by the Left within the movement in recent years. Yet the election results show that the level of socialist consciousness amongst the working class is very low indeed at the present time. How can we close the gap between left socialist policies adopted by the movement and the real present level of class political consciousness?

There is no point in simply continuing to offer 'the mixture as before' in the hope that in time the electorate will come round to accept it. It could take a long time, and what damage would Thatcher be doing meanwhile. Nor is it realistic to bank on deepening economic crisis closing the gap for us by 'radicalising the masses' — that is the kind of crude belly politics that has got us into trouble before.

Some of the more thoughtful responses to the election defeat have concentrated on the need for more effective political education. Arthur Scargill, for example, has called for greater efforts to 'politicise' the union membership through the union's own educational efforts. One can only welcome this as a positive development. But is it enough? Quite apart from the fact that the kind of 'politicisation' some union leaders would want is quite different from the kind that Arthur Scargill is after; quite apart from the fact that union education programmes generally only reach a minority of activists — and that the trade union movement itself is not the whole working class — there is a more general problem that can be summed up in one sentence from Lenin: 'Revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses; never is it brought about by propaganda alone'[1].

Investment

The left does indeed need to turn outwards and engage in a much more public 'battle of ideas'; but this will not be enough unless it is accompanied by a growing involvement of masses of people in the experience of struggle — which raises the question, what issues will people struggle about?

So I think that the most fruitful responses to the general election setback come from those on the Left who are looking for such issues; who are seeking the kind of policies and approaches that will build a political majority in action against Thatcherism — a majority that will not in the first instance be a 'majority for socialism', but which will open up possibilities for advance towards socialism.

> within our working class today there is a divide that is as deep as ever

Communists should be able to make a major contribution to this latter trend, for Marxist theory and the historical experience of the world communist movement provide an invaluable starting point for such an analysis.

An essential quality for all who claim to be Marxists is the ability to recognise the 'new' when it emerges. 'New' phenomena in the present situation include:

* A Tory government of a new type as compared with previous postwar Tory governments.
* A new stage in the long-term decline of Labour's electoral position, with the emergence of the Alliance as a considerable electoral force in terms of votes.
* In the background, behind those developments on the visible surface of politics — long-term irreversible changes in the industrial composition and social characteristics of the working class.

All three phenomena take place in a context of continuing economic recession in the capitalist world as a whole, affecting Britain with special severity.

HOW 'NEW' IS THE THATCHER GOVERNMENT?

All postwar governments, Labour or Tory, have been committed to the maintenance of the capitalist system; but that does not mean that differences in the way they set about that task are not significant. What suffering it caused the working class when the Communist International took the mistaken view that, since bourgeois democracy and fascism were both forms of monopoly capitalist rule, there was no significant difference between them from the point of view of revolutionary strategy.

This year, 1983, is the 50th anniversary of a sombre and tragic series of events. In January 1933 Hitler was appointed Chancellor; in February the Reichstag fire was followed by mass arrests of communists; in May the trade unions were taken over by the Nazis; in June the Social Democratic Party was banned; and from then on the bloody terror was in full swing.

This heavy defeat for the working class and for democracy, with all its consequences for world peace, compelled communists to break with the disastrously misconceived analysis and strategy which had contributed to the fascist victory, and to turn towards a new, different, and ultimately successful strategy; which I will summarise later.

So — how 'new' is Thatcherism? Clearly it cannot be equated to Hitlerism! Nevertheless, in its own way, it does represent a major turn to reaction.

This is the first Tory government to decisively break with the 'consensus politics' of the postwar period. None of its

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

postwar predecessors has attacked democratic rights on so wide a front and with so much success. No previous postwar Tory government has been so consciously 'ideological', so successful in playing on 'patriotic' sentiment (eg, the Falklands), so skilful in posing deeply reactionary notions in popular guise.

The causes

This sharp Tory move to the right is an objective phenomenon which does not depend on the character of one individual. Its starting point was the ending of that period of relative postwar boom that had been the basis of the consensus politics of Tory and Labour leaderships. With the onset of deeper crisis from the middle and late 60s, sharp industrial struggles developed against government attempts to impose wage restraint and against anti-trade union legislation. These coincided with sharpening struggles on a world scale — Vietnam, apartheid, 1968 in France, etc. Out of all this the ruling class faced a challenging combination of a strong and confident trade union movement, a high level of industrial militancy, and moves to the left amongst the activists and at leadership level in the trade unions and Labour Party. It may be recalled that at one point *The Times* even asked if Britain was becoming ungovernable!

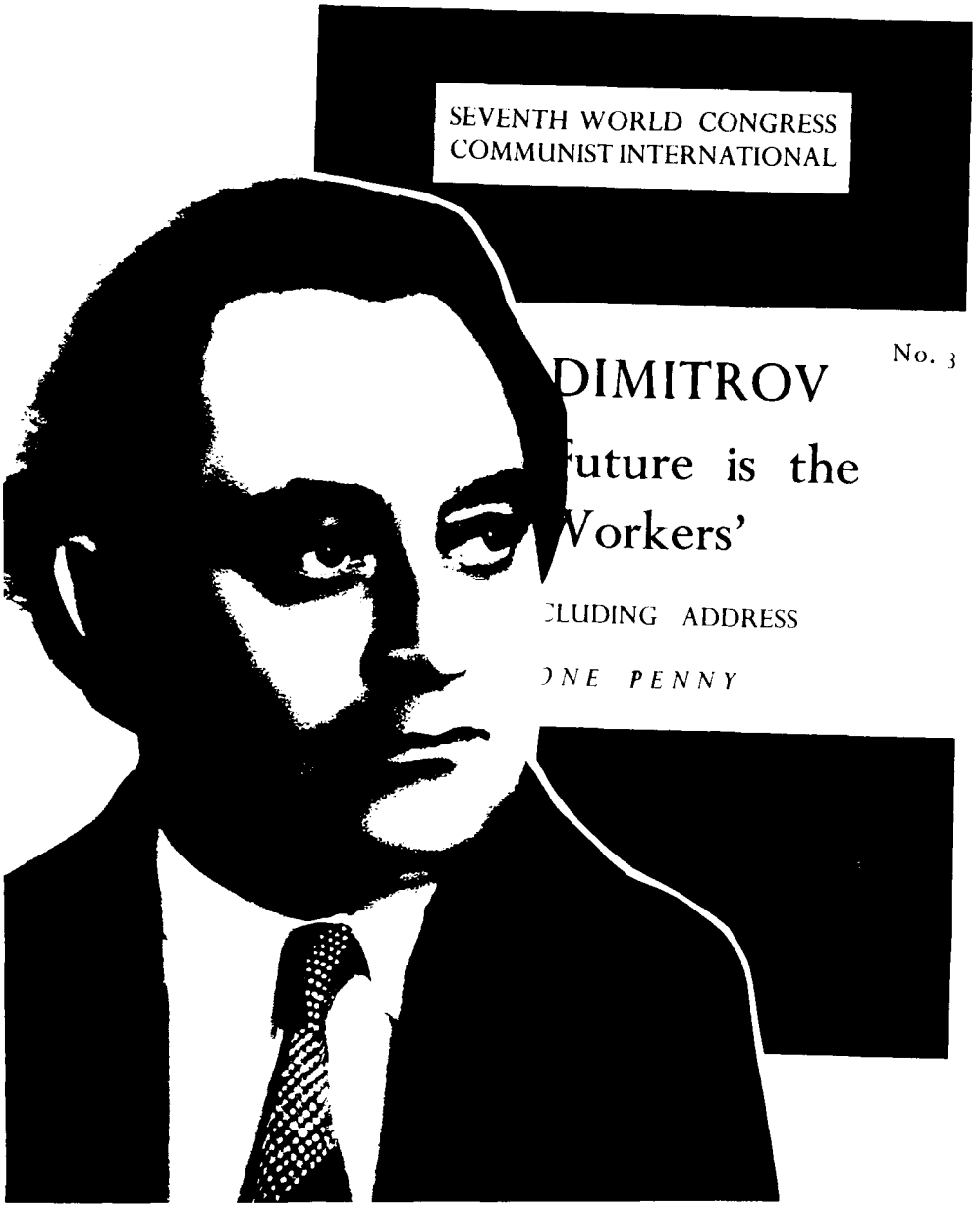
These developments coincided with changes of a very different character in popular attitudes. The generation that grew up with private medicine appreciated to the full the benefits of the NHS and the rest of the 'welfare state'. The generation that grew up with the welfare state took the benefits for granted and were much more concerned with the shortcomings imposed on these public services by financial constraints and bureaucratic structures.

Meanwhile the Tory Party had its own problems. With Labour in government for 11 of the 16 years between 1964 and 1979, Harold Wilson looked like achieving his ambition of making Labour Britain's 'natural Party of Government'.

The Tory response to all these factors was the emergence of an aggressive right-wing trend determined to break with consensus politics, to shift the balance of class forces back in favour of capitalism at the expense of the working class, to restore the Tory Party to its traditional position as the 'natural' party of government, and to push the Labour Party to the outer fringe of politics.

The move to the right in the Tory Party is thus not simply a matter of the Thatcher personality; it is a response to changes that have been taking place in a period of continuing capitalist crisis. The special 'Thatcher ingredient' is the ability to project deeply reactionary ideas in 'popular' guise, to mobilise and build upon deep-seated and widespread reactionary prejudices, and to skilfully exploit discontent with shortcomings in the welfare state.

They have succeeded to the extent that after four years in power they have been returned with their 1979 vote largely intact, while Labour's position as the 'alternative party of government' is seriously in question for the first time for over half a century; and, outside Parliament, industrial militancy is generally at a very low ebb.



Parallels

The whole scenario offers some interesting parallels to developments in Europe in the late 20s and early 30s. Then, democracy was under challenge from fascism, which was advancing because the working class was divided within itself and isolated from its potential allies. Now, democracy is again under fire, with reaction advancing over a deeply divided working class — what better illustration can one have of working class disunity than a Labour vote of little more than a quarter of the class, with most of the rest voting Tory or Alliance?

Of course we must not equate Thatcherism with Hitlerism. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that before the Nazis could gain the power to physically exterminate their opponents, they had to build a mass base by ideological means — seizing upon genuine popular discontents that the Left had failed to grapple with in order to rewrite Germany's political agenda

[1] *Left Wing Communism;* Sel. Wks. Vol 10, p126.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

STUDENT

THE THATCHER GOVERNMENT

Peter Riddell

The first authoritative analysis – its performance so far, and the prospects for the future – by the *Financial Times* Political Editor.

c.£12.50 and £4.95

AND

Socialist Arguments set out the alternatives to Thatcherism. Now, where does the Left go from here?

SOCIALIST STRATEGIES

Edited by David Coates and Gordon Johnston

c.£17.50 and £6.50

Martin Robertson · Oxford

THE other CINEMA presents

A SPECIAL STUDENT OFFER:

YOUR GROUP NEEDS FILMS on

EL SALVADOR / IRELAND / LATIN AMERICA / ANTI-RACISM / The WOMEN'S MOVEMENT / The LABOUR MOVEMENT / PALESTINE / The NUCLEAR ARMS RACE.

Write Now, enclosing s.a.e. and this ad. for our Free List of Films and Videos, and your First Film Booking will be Half Price!

THE other CINEMA

The New British Political System

Government and Society in the 1980s
Edited by Ian Budge and David McKay

Written by members and associates of the Department of Government at Essex University, this is a completely up-to-date review of British politics, taking into account the inability of governments to cope with economic decline and its consequences. The authors consider traditional assumptions about British politics and whether they still hold in the troubled 1980s. The book assumes no previous knowledge of the subject and all points are thoroughly explained as they are introduced.

paperback 0 582 29553 X £5.50 net
publication September 1983

The Politics of Transport

Enid Wistrich
Politics Today Series

This is an up-to-date account of a complex, topical and controversial subject. It includes an overview of the long-term trends and developments in transport policy and in the main operating systems since 1945, and looks at the guiding ideology of the professionals, the policymakers, the politicians and the pressure groups behind them. Recent developments in transport have highlighted the policy conflict between left and right. This timely book is a balanced and sensible account of current policy and future options.

paperback 0 582 29523 8 probably £3.95 net
publication October 1983

Available from bookshops or in case of difficulty please write to Linda Cockram, Longman House, Burnt Mill, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE, or telephone 0279 26721 ex 46.

Longman

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SAVE UP TO 40% on the normal student subscription price

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS OFFER NOW

Student subscription order form

As part of this special offer to students, the New Statesman will re-direct your copies when you are not studying to any other address you send in.

This offer is open to all students currently involved in a course of formal education and those studying for professional qualifications.

The *New Statesman* is an independent radical weekly which looks at ideas and issues with a fresh mind. It doesn't preach or treat you like a simpleton. If you want a magazine that you can really argue with, the *New Statesman* should be your choice.

The *New Statesman* isn't all world leaders and party politics. Its coverage of things like TV, film and books provides a stimulating and sometimes acerbic view of what's worth seeing or reading. It features fiction from writers like Robert McCrum, Nadine Gordimer, Paul Theroux and William Boyd.

What other magazine provides this amount of variety?

I would like to take advantage of your special nine-month introductory offer to students. I enclose a cheque/postal order for £12 for 37 issues (normal student subscription rate: £24)

Please send this form with payment to Subscriptions Department (C005), New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Name .....

Address .....

Post Code .....

Place of Study ..... *Course of Study* .....

Year studies end .....

DISCOVERING WOMEN'S HISTORY
A practical manual
Deirdre Beddoe

A down-to-earth and constructive manual showing how to use a variety of sources (from old films and women's magazines to the Public Records Office) to research into women's history from 1800 to 1945.

£3.95 paperback from Pandora Press
Available in all good bookshops
Pandora Press, 39 Store Street, London WC1E7DD

PANDORA PRESS

STATES & SOCIETIES

'An encyclopedic, provocative, and magisterial compendium of work on political and state theory ranging from Machiavelli to Poulantzas, from absolutism to the post-capitalist state, from economic intervention to social citizenship . . . in short, almost everything you always wanted to know and found too daunting to follow up. I thoroughly recommend it, from its valuable introduction to its thought-provoking conclusions.'

Bob Jessop, University of Essex

Editorial Panel: David Held, James Anderson, Bram Gieben, Stuart Hall, Laurence Harris, Paul Lewis, Noel Parker and Ben Turok.

640 pages £5.95 and £19.50

Martin Robertson · Oxford

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in much the same way that Thatcher's 'populism' seeks to rewrite our agenda here today.

So let us consider how communists reacted in the 30s.

CHANGES IN COMMUNIST STRATEGY IN THE 30s

In the late 20s the Comintern adopted what came to be known as the 'class against class' tactic. It is unfortunate that it became so labelled, for there was nothing wrong then, nor now, with the view that class struggle is the main driving force for social change; and when the Comintern from 1935 went over to the very different tactics of the united front and popular front, this did not signify any weakening of class analysis or class consciousness. The essence of the mistaken views of the class against class period lay in the following points.

1 Just as we have in recent years experienced the end of a postwar boom, so in Europe in the late 20s there were clear signs that the temporary postwar stabilisation of capitalism was ending and that a new economic crisis was developing. From these correct economic facts, wrong political conclusions were drawn — that a revolutionary crisis would rapidly develop and place the proletarian socialist revolution on the agenda as an immediate issue.

2 The immediate issue being seen as the struggle for workers' power, all forms of capitalist rule were regarded as equally to be opposed. In 1931, for instance, the

continuing to offer 'the mixture as before'

Executive Committee of Comintern declared that 'it was necessary to put an end to the practice of drawing a line between fascism and bourgeois democracy, and between the parliamentary form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and its open fascist form.'[2]

3 Greatly overestimating the revolutionary possibilities in the situation, and recalling the treacherous role of many social democratic leaders in the revolutionary wave at the end of the First World War, the Comintern treated social democratic parties and reformist organisations in general as if they had in their entirety gone over to the side of the class enemy. The view that Social Democracy was 'the main prop of the bourgeoisie' found expression in the phrase 'social fascism'.

This strategy did nothing to halt the advance of fascism; indeed, together with its mirror-image, the deep-seated hatred and suspicion of communists by social democrats, it helped to make it impossible to build the unity that alone could have stopped fascism. The bitter experiences of defeat led to the rejection of this strategy; the new strategy which emerged at the 7th World Congress of the Comintern in 1935 had the following main features:

Armed guards (Blackshirts) outside the headquarters of the British Union of Fascists, London 1925.

1 It recognised that what the deepening economic crisis had put on the agenda was not revolution, but counter-revolution in its brutal fascist form.

2 From that standpoint, it was no longer possible to treat all forms of capitalist rule as equally to be opposed. On the contrary; crucial to the new strategy was the need to focus on fascism as the main enemy, and to fight to defend and where possible extend all the democratic rights won under capitalism.

3 The task then became to mobilise and unite the broadest possible range of forces against fascism and its drive to war. Central to this was the struggle to establish a united front of the working class itself; this was seen as inseparable from the struggle to build a broader alliance of all anti-fascist forces, the 'Peoples Front'. The struggle for unity went on at all levels — from attempts to get top-level agreements between political parties (including petty bourgeois parties as well as Social Democratic and Labour Parties) to the drive to get unity in action of masses of people around the key issues of fascism and war.

4 This general strategy was seen as opening up the possibility that new forms of transition — via United Front or Peoples Front governments — might be found to socialist revolutionary changes. The road to socialism was seen as a road of struggle to defend and extend democratic rights.

The basis of advance

This new line had to be fought for against sectarian attitudes in the Communist Parties and more widely on the Left; indeed, attacks on the popular front strategy are still part of the stock-in-trade of Trotskyism. The new strategy appeared to be a retreat from the heady days of preparation for proletarian revolution; it seemed essentially defensive. In reality, the new line was the only way to end the retreat and begin to mobilise the forces for eventual advances. The damage done by earlier sectarian errors could not be undone overnight; but even in the short term the new line fairly soon led, in many countries, to a growth in the strength, influence and confidence of both Communist and Socialist Parties. In the longer term, this was the strategy that on a world scale accomplished the defeat of fascism, and in a number of countries opened up new roads to socialism after the war.

Now, to return from this brief historical interlude to the present. While Thatcherism is not Hitlerism, nevertheless in its own way it represents a sharp turn to reactionary ideology and authoritarian practice. I therefore think that, provided real changes are recognised, a study of 7th World Congress strategy has relevance for us in Britain today. The successful defence and extension of democratic rights requires recognition of the new, dominant, hard-line right-wing Toryism as the main enemy; and requires that we build against that enemy a united working class and a still broader alliance — an alliance that may, at a later stage, lead into that 'broad democratic alliance' described in the Communist Party's programme, '*The British Road to Socialism*'[3] as the force that can transform Britain.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PROBLEMS OF UNITY AND ALLIANCES IN THE 80s

The aim — working class unity and a broad alliance — may be the same as in the 30s; but that aim has now to be pursued in very different circumstances.

The British working class has grown numerically since the 30s; it has also become more diverse in its composition. Many of its social characteristics have changed, and the changes have tended to accelerate in recent years. There can be no success in building working class unity unless these changes are given the kind of serious study that has been attempted in some recent *Marxism Today* articles.[4] I want to deal only with a few aspects that strike me with particular force.

First consider the fact that a number of professional occupations that were followed on a 'self-employed' basis 40-50 years ago are now followed on a 'salaried employee' basis. Objectively such people are now part of the working class; but it does not automatically follow that their relative income levels, 'life style' and political attitudes have changed correspondingly.

Then there is the question of race. True, back in the 30s the Blackshirts tried to use anti-semitism to divide the working class; but race has become a very much bigger issue today. Black workers were a rarity in Britain in the 30s; today they make up a substantial minority of the working class, and suffer from the institutionalised racism of government legislation was well as from fascist propaganda. There is therefore today a considerable section of the British people — mainly, but not entirely, working class people — for whom racial discrimination both intensifies economic exploitation, and adds other dimensions of oppression.

When we consider women, a transformation has taken place that goes beyond changed relationships to the productive process. There has been an ideological change of such a character that it has become a material force. The ideas, attitudes and expectations of women have changed beyond recognition in recent decades. So here again is a very large part of the British people — at least half — for whom economic exploitation is not the only problem. Sexual discrimination both intensifies the economic exploitation and adds to it new dimensions of oppression.

A divide as big as ever

There is also a more general point that I would make. Before the First World War Marx, Engels and Lenin described a British working class split by a great divide between the 'aristocracy of labour' and the down-trodden, unorganised masses of unskilled labourers. They also pointed to the political consequences of that division. Within our working class today there is a divide — both economic and cultural — that is as deep as ever it was in those days and with potential political consequences no less serious.

At one end of the scale a growing section of our class is young, unemployed, congregated in depressing inner-city environments, experiencing real poverty, and with little or no contact with the labour movement. At the other end of the scale are workers who — by organisation and struggle — have won reasonably secure and well-paid jobs, who own their own homes in the more salubrious suburbs, who take an annual holiday abroad as a matter of course. The economic basis for concessions to the class as whole may have gone, but some sections of the class have been able to win a relatively favourable position, and some have been able to hold on to it even in this worsening economic situation.

So there is an increased diversity and complexity of the class, which has many consequences. It greatly widens the range of issues which workers are concerned about, and some of those issues will also be of concern to people who are not strictly definable as 'working class'. It gives rise to new movements and organisations which, unlike the labour movement, are not formed on a 'class' basis, but which express demands and aspirations that are important to sections of the class. It therefore poses new problems for building working class unity. It was in recognition of those problems, and in the search for a solution to them, that the Communist Party's 1977 version of *The British Road to Socialism* developed the concept of alliances. Six years later, this concept has lost none of its validity.

> even the broadest labour organisations comprise less than half the class

ALLIANCES AND THE BRITISH ROAD TO SOCIALISM

The *British Road* uses the term 'alliance' in three ways which are inter-related but not identical.

In the first instance, it uses it to describe different sections of the working class coming together for common action — a process which helps to overcome sectional differences and build unity of the class. In British working class experience there is nothing novel in the use of the term 'alliance' in this sense — the Triple Alliance was not the first and probably will not be the last time that workers themselves use the term 'alliance' to describe their efforts to achieve unity.

Secondly, the *British Road* uses the term 'alliance' to describe a relationship between the labour movement and other democratic social forces and movements. Some of these latter may relate only to 'single issue campaigns'; others express, across a broad spectrum of issues, the interests and attitudes of such important sections of the people as black people, women, national minorities, etc. 'Alliance' in this sense is not only to do with uniting the working class; it is also to do with building a broader alliance, since the other social forces and movements, even if *predominantly* working class in composition, are not *exclusively* working class.

This seems to me to be a particularly important concept at the present time. The labour movement is not the whole working class; it is not even the whole of the politically active working class. The labour movement is of decisive importance because it is that section of the working class that is organised on a class basis; but at present it is only a minority of the working class. Even the broadest labour movement organisations, the trade unions, comprise less than half the class[5]; while the Labour Party cannot now claim the voting support of much more than a quarter of the class.

Yet there are other social forces, movements and organisations which, even though they are not organised on a 'class' basis and are not part of the labour movement, are in fact struggling against policies and against forms of oppression that are closely related to the overall domination of monopoly capital and, specifically, to the reactionary policies of the Thatcher Government.

Equality not subordination

The labour movement — at present comprising a minority of the people, a minority of the class — cannot defeat Thatcher without an alliance with these

[2] *Outline History of the Communist International*, Moscow 1971, p313.

[3] The 1977 edition of *The British Road to Socialism* may be obtained, price 40p from Communist Party literature departments.

[4] See for example articles by Doreen Massey in *Marxism Today*, April and July 1983.

[5] The TUC reports membership as 10,510,157 on Dec. 31st last; it is probably now below 10 million.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other democratic forces. And it must be an 'alliance' — that is, a relationship in which neither party seeks to dominate the other.

This may be a difficult pill for the Labour Party to swallow. It has been so shaped by narrow electoralism geared to a 'first-past-the-post' electoral system that it is really only at ease with a 'straightforward' two-party set-up in which the Tory Party dominates its political terrain while Labour enjoys a similar monopoly in its own territory. But that traditional set-up is breaking up under the impact of a protracted capitalist crisis and its political consequences. If Labour wants to win it must come to terms with political forces that may become allies but will not be subordinates. The labour movement must win the position of 'leading force' in such alliances; it cannot impose it.

To take a practical example, consider CND. It cannot 'join' the Labour Party because it draws its support from a wider political spectrum than Labour — that is its strength! But to the extent that Labour supports CND's objectives, an effective alliance in action for those objectives is a real possibility.

What I am talking about here is not some hypothetical possible future electoral arrangement when the next general election takes place; what I am talking about is the struggle to build a political majority in action *now* against the Thatcher government — though that, of course, will help to determine the result and maybe even the timing of the next election.

Class alliance

The *British Road* also uses the term 'alliance' in the 'classic' Marxist sense, of a relationship between the working class and potential allies from other classes. In these days, when the working class is such an overwhelming majority of the population, has this idea any value at all? To answer that question simply by reference to the actual numbers involved would mean ignoring complex social interrelationships.

The experience of the People's March for Jobs is a case in point. Wherever it went, working class and labour movement support was crucial. But its support could also be won from local tradespeople and clergy, that not only helped in very practical ways — it also helped morale by showing the breadth of community support.

In fact, the question of 'non-proletarian allies' is also tied up with the unity and political consciousness of the working class itself. The working class is not sealed off from the rest of society in a watertight box, it is influenced often for the worse but sometimes for the better by other social strata. For instance — because some workers are influenced by religious ideas, support for a particular campaign by church leaders is not just a matter of 'allies of the working class'; it positively contributes to the unity of the working class on that issue. This applies with even greater force to all those people in scientific, intellectual, cultural — yes, and even 'showbiz' and sporting — circles, who play a role in 'opinion-forming'. The Tories knew what they were doing when they staged a mass rally with a platform of showbiz personalities during the election — the labour movement would neglect such people at its peril. They have much to learn from the labour movement, but something distinctive of their own to contribute to it.

None of this denies the 'leading role of the working class'; the point is to try to understand what Lenin meant when he said: 'Class political consciousness can be brought to the workers *only from without*, that is, only outside of the economic struggle, outside of the sphere of relations between workers and employers. The sphere from which alone it is possible to obtain this knowledge is the sphere of relationships between *all* the various classes and strata and the state and the government.'[6]

> attacks on the popular front strategy are still part of the stock in trade of Trotskyism

THE POLITICS OF UNITY

My theme has been the need to unite the working class and build a broad alliance against the main enemy, Thatcherism, the present form of extreme right wing Tory reaction — not an electoral arrangement, though it will certainly affect future election prospects, but an alliance built in struggle now.

It is of course essential to consider what kind of policies provide the basis for such a broad alliance.

'Socialism now' is not a rallying cry that will at this time build a political majority against Thatcher. It is vital to project the vision of socialism — in ways that are relevant to modern times — and to show the policies that are needed to achieve socialism. But the majority of the British people will not be won for socialism without the experience of struggle on such issues as they can *now* be won to struggle for.

In the most general sense, just as in the 30s the central issues on which unity were built were unemployment, fascism and war, so today, the central issues are peace, jobs and democratic rights. These generalisations have to be broken down to concrete demands around which actual campaigns can be developed. However, I am not going to set out a detailed 'shopping list' of such demands. The reason is not simply that I am running out of my allotted space; nor is it just because a number of such demands are already fairly well known and established. There is a deeper reason.

Today, if we really want to build unity, it is no good thinking that the national forums of the labour movement are the founts of all wisdom. If the labour movement really wants to win young people, black workers, women, etc — then it must ask them what they really want, it must consult with their autonomous organisations where they exist, it must not assume that it already knows what is best for these people. Indeed, in general, we all need to do more to find out what issues all sections of working people really feel are important to them.

I also have one final lesson from the 30s in mind. The change in communist strategy was not imposed from above by an all-wise international leadership. To a large extent it came about because rank and file communist and social democratic workers, bearing on their backs the bitter price of disunity, forced changes on their leaderships. The decisions of top bodies of the labour movement are very important but they are not everything. Too much reliance has been placed on winning decisions, and positions, at top level; with a few honourable exceptions, too little has been done at grassroots level.

The vital next step in beginning to build a united movement against Thatcherism is in my view precisely at grassroots level. In workplaces and in communities all over Britain we need a coming together, however informal, of trade union and community activists, of black organisations and of young people, of the peace movement, the women's movement, of Communists and Labour — not to create some formal structure labelled 'Broad Democratic Alliance', but to find out in what ways and on what issues a start can be made in building unity against the Tory attacks.

As a communist, I naturally believe that our party, which developed this strategy, which has deep roots in the labour movement and links with all the democratic movements, has a key role to play in this process. Can we rise to the challenge of putting our own party programme into action? □

[6] *What Is To Be Done;* Sel. Wks. Vol 2, p98.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IVS vacancies in THIRD WORLD DEVELOPMENT

SWAZILAND
Builder/Instructor; Hatchery Manager; Agriculture Teachers & Instructors; Coordinator for Agricultural Cooperative; Coordinator for Workcamps Association.

MOZAMBIQUE
(minimum 2 years post qualification work experience).
Agriculturalists; Foresters; Agricultural Engineers; Water Engineers; Sawmill Managers/Technicians; Skilled Artisans e.g. Fitters, Welders etc.; Building Supervisors; Topographers; Economists; Planners; Architects; Accountants; EFL & Science Teachers; Doctors; Nurse-Tutors; Medical Laboratory Technicians. Also Maths, English, Technical Drawing Teachers at Secondary level, EFL for Primary/Middle School to teach at the International School at Maputo.

BOTSWANA
TEFL Adviser for Primary Teachers; Coordinator for Pit Latrine Project; Electronics Engineer; Food Technologist; Water Technicians.

LESOTHO
Water Engineer.

WORK FOR PEACE IVS & UNDERSTANDING

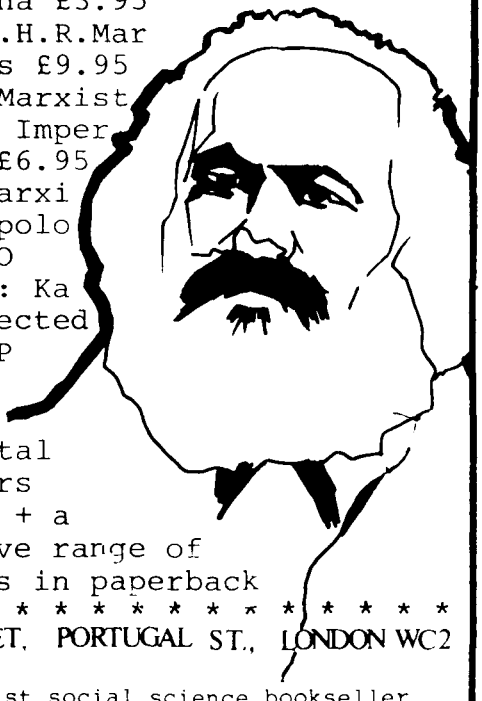
2 year contracts including modest living allowance and flights. Regret no funding for dependants.

Write for details including a short c.v. and s.a.e. to:
International Voluntary Service, MX4,
53 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 6YL.

THE ECONOMISTS' BOOKSHOP

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

McLELLAN David: Marx-the first 100 years Fontana £3.95
PARKINSON G.H.R.Mar x & Marxisms £9.95
BREWER A.: Marxist Theories of Imper ialism RKP £6.95
BLOCH M.: Marxi sm & Anthropolo gy OUP £9.50
McLELLAN D.: Ka rl Marx:selected writings OUP £4.95
SMITH David Marx's Kapital for Beginners W & R £2.95 + a comprehensive range of his writings in paperback



* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

CLARE MARKET, PORTUGAL ST., LONDON WC2

specialist social science bookseller

Pluto Press
live issues

Barbara Ehrenreich
The Hearts of Men
American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment
'a pleasure to read, entertaining and imaginative.' New York Times
£4.95

THE EMPIRE'S OLD CLOTHES
ARIEL DORFMAN
What the Lone Ranger, Babar and other Innocent Heroes do to our minds...
co-author of the widely-read
How to Read Donald Duck. £4.95

Soon to be published by the same author
WIDOWS
A powerful first novel by this prolific writer.
£7.95 hdbk

IS THERE ANYONE HERE FROM EDUCATION?
Edited by AnnMarie Wolpe and James Donald
Calls for a rethinking of the left's old ideas and assumptions about education.

UK £2.95

EDUCATION AFTER THATCHER

Available from all good bookshops or direct from **Pluto Press**
The Works, 105a Torriano Avenue, London NW5 2RX

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The communications revolution has already started and it will transform our lives. But what is it and what should we do about it?

Peter Golding and Graham Murdock

Privatising Pleasure

AS MRS THATCHER ANNOUNCED to *The Director* last month, 'there are great industries in other people's pleasures'. Her utopia of fast food chains and Disneyland parks built over an industrial wasteland may seem an unlikely solution to economic crisis. But it is almost visionary compared with most debate on the Left, which still discusses communications in terms of press hostility to Labour, bias in television news, and the continued failure of the Press Council. These are important issues, but they do not begin to grapple with scope and scale of current developments.

The emerging industries of video and cable may not be great as yet, but they are significant. They are part of a push to counter the crisis of profitability by restructuring production and consumption around the 'golden triangle' of new communications industries-telecommunications, computing, and television. Whereas the implications of this process for employment and trade unionism have been widely commented on, the impact on leisure and consumption has received much less attention than it deserves.

While nearly a fifth of consumer expenditure is currently devoted to leisure goods and services, only 3% goes on entertainment and recreation. So even in the present recession there is considerable room for an orchestrated reallocation of spending on new products and activities. The cable television services that will be announced in November are the latest attempt to tap this potential. Like the video boom and the growth in home computers, they strengthen the trend towards a more home-centred leisure and information system based around the television set, helped along by the Government's efforts to transfer many of the caring functions of the welfare state back to the family and return much of the female labour force to the home. Television already occupies more of most people's leisure time than anything else except sleeping. Four out of ten households still have no car. Over half of unskilled workers and the unwaged now have no holiday away from home, a higher proportion than twenty years ago. While going to the cinema or a sporting event, as much as visits to the theatre, opera or ballet, is mostly confined to a small and demographically limited minority. At the same time, cut-backs in public facilities such as libraries, advice services, evening classes and recreation centres, are reducing leisure options still further and reinforcing people's reliance on television for information, argument and entertainment.

> Her utopia of fast food chains and Disneyland parks built over an industrial wasteland.

Restructuring

This restricting squeeze on public provision is part of a concerted effort to restructure the communications system to the maximum advantage of private business. The most important moves involve: transferring public money and resources to commercial companies both directly through outright sales and indirectly through grants and tax allowances; opening-up new markets of private enterprise; and allowing firms to operate with the minimum amount of public regulations. Enthusiasts claim that these changes will produce better services, increased choice and more responsiveness to consumer demands. The reality is the exact opposite. Many people, perhaps even most, will find themselves with fewer real choices, worse basic services, less chance of having their views and interests fairly represented, and virtually no chance of helping to shape future policy. To understand why however, we need to look at recent developments in more detail.

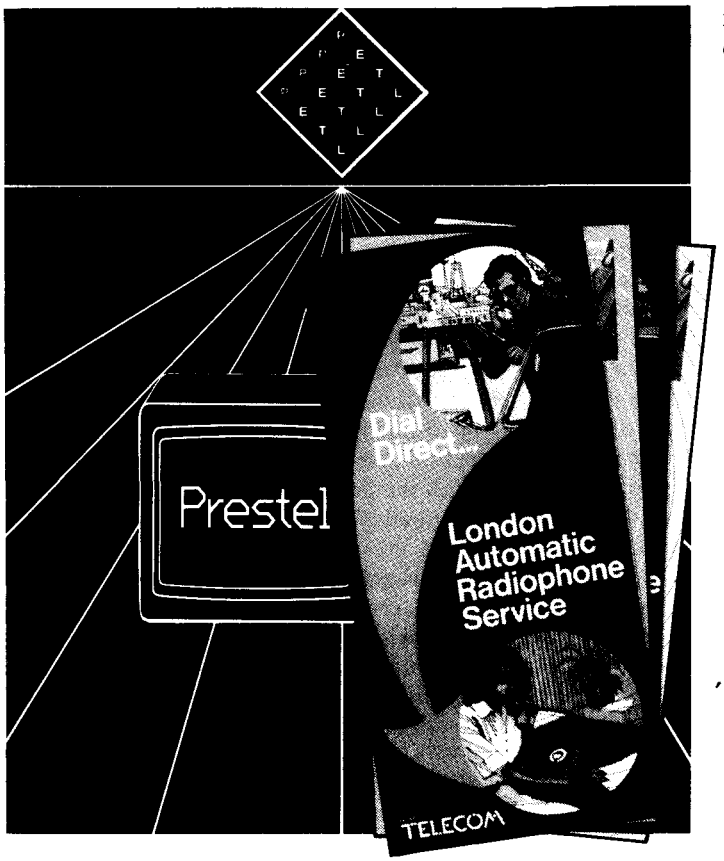
Because they are highly profitable and in growth areas, public companies in the new communications industries have been prime targets for de-nationalisation. So far the Government has disposed of: its 25% stake in ICL, the country's leading computer company; a half share of Ferranti, the major electronics group; half of Cable and Wireless, the rapidly expanding telecommunications concern; half of British Aerospace, a key force in the development of communications satellites; and the whole of International Aeradio, the avionic and computer subsidiary of British Airways. And there's more to come. There is talk of selling the Government's stake in INMOS, Britain's only producer of microchips, the basic building blocks of the new communications industries, and some of the more fundamentalist free marketeers are floating the idea of hiving off the more profitable divisions of the BBC, such as Radio 1. In the meantime, firm plans to sell 51% of British Telecom by next autumn have already been announced.

These moves represent a significant loss to the public sector at several levels. By transferring strategic decision-making from parliament and government to private boardrooms, they make it difficult if not impossible to develop an effective and integrated public policy for communications. Rational planning in the public interest gives way to opportunist expansion based on the search for corporate advantage and maximum profit. Moreover, by disposing of some of the most profitable public enterprises, they sign away a significant source of revenue which could be used to improve and extend public communications services of all kinds. Nor have the short-term gains been particularly great. Not only have a number of stakes been sold off too cheaply, but the proceeds have been further reduced by the costs of arranging the sell-offs and by the money handed back to the newly privatised concerns. British Aerospace for example, received a cash injection of £100 million, which was only £50 million less than the proceeds of the share sale.[1]

Liberalising thrust

As well as transferring public resources to private investors, the Government has opened up major new markets for commercial companies and relaxed the rules regulating their operations. The effects of this 'liberalising' thrust are already evident in the key

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



areas of cable television and telecommunications. Take the recent decision to give the go-ahead for a cellular radio network for example. This will enable business people to use a cordless telephone to make and receive calls while on the move. Major cities and their connecting motorways will be dividied into small areas, or cells, each with its own radio transmitter and receiver operating on a unique frequency. As subscribers travel from one cell to another a computerised exchange switches frequencies automatically to provide a continuous link. Two 25 year operating licences have been issued, one to Sectel, the joint venture between British Telecom and Securicor, the other to the Racal-Millicom partnership. By allocating scarce frequencies exclusively for their use it prevents them being used to develop public services such as neighbourhood radio. This decision illustrates the key feature of current policy — its tendency to put the demands and needs of business before the broader public interest. This is also evident in the way the telecommunications system is developing more generally.

The most important move so far has been the decision to grant a 25 year licence to the Mercury consortium (comprised of Cable and Wireless, BP and Barclays Merchant Bank) allowing them to set up a rival national network in competition with British Telecom. The aim is to cream off some of BT's lucrative business traffic by providing voice and data links between major cities using advanced fibre optic cables laid alongside British Rail tracks. However, the final links connecting subscribers to the system still rely on BT's lines, and this arrangement is currently the focus of industrial action by the Post Office Engineering Union. Two BT engineers were suspended in June for refusing to make connections in the City and North London, and it was left to management to finish the job. Since then the POEU has stepped up its opposition to Mercury and to the privatisation plan. Their campaign deserves the full support of the labour movement, since apart from the threat to jobs and services, BT's removal from the public sector will seriously damage future attempts to develop a comprehensive communications policy.

Transforming British Telecom

Resisting the formal transfer of ownership and control is only part of the struggle however since BT has already started to move away from being a public enterprise. As the Government's briefing document on telecommunications approvingly notes; 'after decades of monopoly, the prospect of competition and the advent of new technology are stimulating BT to respond to market opportunities'[2] Or as one financial journalist put it, 'BT is out-privatising private industry'[3] Even before the privatisation plans were announced, BT's management had already considered hiving off some operations and financing them from private sources.[4] This new commercially minded stance has led to an increasing concentration on equipment and services tailored to corporate requirements. Recent moves include the launching of the new Merlin office automation range and the Satstream network which transmits speech and text from country to country using satellites.

The tendency to favour business needs is also evident in the development of BT's Prestel information system where subscribers use their telephone to call up 'pages' of information from a central computer store for display on a television screen. Prestel was originally conceived as a mass public utility offering an electronic reference library, but the high costs of using the system made it unattractive to most domestic subscribers, and in 1981 the marketing emphasis switched to business users. BT set out to provide more data for them (such as up-to-the-minute flight information from major airports) and to expand the facilities for private networks, such as the one linking 150 estate agents up and down the country. Recently there have been moves to bump up domestic use, though the emphasis is on the more affluent sections of the population. The Club 403 experiment which enables subscribers in the Birmingham area to order goods from more than 50 shops from home, is confined to the leafier suburbs such as Sutton Coldfield and Edgbaston where credit card holders are thick on the ground. Similarly, the Homelink electronic banking and shopping venture with Nottingham Building Society is only open to investors with at least £1,000 in their account.

As well as excluding poorer families from these new services, BT's search for profit is increasingly putting basic telephone services beyond their reach. Traditionally, BT fulfilled its public service function of trying to bring a phone within the reach of every household by subsidising the losses on local calls (which are mainly made by domestic subscribers) out of the profits from long distance and international traffic (which is mostly paid for by companies). This has now changed and tariffs have been 're-balanced' to favour business users to make ordinary subscribers pay a higher price for basic services. In November 1981, a combination of increased charges and reductions in the time allowed per unit raised the price of a three minute local call by an estimated 115%, while the first few months of 1982 saw 33% reductions in the price of calls to North America and on the 100 prime trunk routes for which Mercury will be competing.[5] If

[1] See *Privatisation: Who Loses, Who Profits* London Labour Research Department May 1983 Chapter 5 and Dexter Whitfield *Making it Public: Evidence and Action Against Privatisation* London Pluto Press 1983 Chapter 3.

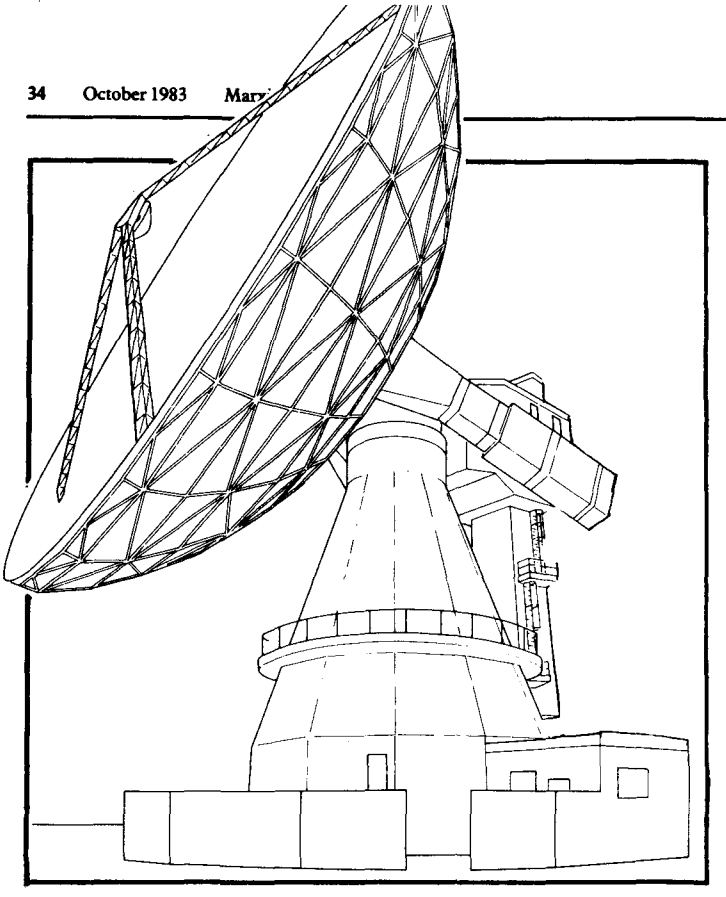
[2] Department of Industry *The Future of Telecommunications in Britain* London HMSO Cmnd 8610 July 1982 p4.

[3] Richard Brooks 'Telecom's private line' *Sunday Times*, May 9th 1982 p54.

[4] 'Wrong Numbers at British Telecom' *The Economist* September 3 1983 p77.

[5] *Private Line: The Future of British Telecom* London Counter Information Services Autumn 1982 p20.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



privatisation goes through, the search for profits will intensify producing more concentration on the needs of business and leading to higher local charges, increased connection fees, and extra payments for basic services such as directory enquiries. A domestic telephone may well become a luxury that more and more pensioners and poor families will be unable to afford, increasing their social isolation and reducing their ability to make complaints and press their rights. Nor can they rely on the present network of public call boxes. These are currently losing an average of over £2,000 a year and will be prime candidates for rationalisation.

Cable television

According to the Government, the rules governing the newly privatised telecommunications system will be 'among the most liberal in the world'[6] and fully in line with their general commitment to de-regulation which allows the search for profits to determine the nature, pattern and price of provision. This stance also underpins their approach to another key sector of the new communications industries — cable television which is closely tied to telecommunications.

As Mrs Thatcher and her advisors have made perfectly clear, the main reason for installing advanced cable systems is to 'provide new telecommunications-based services to homes and business'[7] However, to avoid damaging Mercury's take-off, for the time being cable operators can only offer voice and data transmission facilities in partnership with them or BT. In the long term though, business communication will be a major source of profits. A good deal of the rest will come from interactive services linking domestic subscribers to banks, retailers, utility companies, and information providers. These will extend the kind of facilities offered by the current Prestel experiments. Without moving from your front room, you will be able to vote in a push button opinion poll, book a holiday, order your shopping, transfer money from your bank or credit card account, and have your gas and electricity meters read. It sounds wonderful, but there are snags.

While interactive cable offers convenient access to a range of useful services and information (for those who can afford them), it also increases the power of government agencies and large corporations. By providing detailed surveillance of consumer behaviour, electronic shopping will enable manufacturers to design more sophisticated marketing appeals. And by encouraging you to order goods directly after seeing them displayed on the screen, it gives you less time to reconsider or consult consumer advice services, and increases your reliance on advertising based information. Similarly, by giving government up-to-date intelligence on the state of public attitudes to disarmament say, push button polling helps them to devise better ways of moulding the public mood. Moreover, the fact that more and more information on individuals will be added to computer files that can never be made totally secure, raises pressing problems for privacy and civil liberties.

These issues need to be thought about now, but their full effects are still some way off. Initially, cable will offer extra television entertainment channels. These are the bait to get people hooked up to the system, but in the process the general public will lose both financially and culturally. The tax allowances currently being decided on mean that everybody will subsidise the cable companies out of the public purse, whether or not they can afford the services on offer. While the added competition for viewers and revenues will leave people with a basic television system that offers less choice, diversity and innovation. This is crucial since the BBC and ITV services currently provide the bulk of most people's information and entertainment and play a key role in shaping political perceptions.

Public service television

Up until now, they have been shielded from the full impact of market forces by a regulatory system based on the ideal of public service. These rest in two cardinal principles: an insistence that the full range of provision should be available to everyone equally, and a commitment to diversity — the idea that programming should reflect the widest possible range of views and interests and provide space for innovation and experiment. These principles have not always been enforced as vigorously as they might have been. The IBA's recent performance for example, has done more to reduce diversity than to extend it. They have consistently used an overly narrow interpretation of the balance requirement to undermine the credibility of innovations like the *Friday Alternative* in Channel 4 and block the screening of radical programmes such as Ken Loach's series on trade unionism *Questions of Leadership*, while failing dismally to hold the companies to their franchise promises. The most blatent recent case is TV AM where Peter Jay's 'mission to inform' has been rapidly transformed into a *Sun*-style television tabloid complete with cartoons, horoscopes, and gossip about the stars. But whatever the shortcomings of the present arrangements, and they are considerable, they do at least rest on principles that can be appealed to and which are worth defending. The cable proposals, on the other hand, mark a fundamental break with these ideals. As the Government's White Paper makes perfectly clear, 'Cable should not be seen as a further installation of public service broadcasting but as something different' [8]

Although a new Cable Authority will be set up to oversee the system, the key decisions on what areas to serve and what programming to offer will be left to the commercial judgement of the cable operators. Franchise applicants will be encouraged to provide community and access slots, to cater for minorities, and to use as much British-made material as possible, and promises in these areas will play a part in deciding who is successful, but there are no fixed requirements. Nor is the Cable Authority likely to enforce these clauses very stringently. Firstly, it will be too small

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to monitor the companies' performance adequately. Secondly, it is likely to be dominated by representatives of the industry. And most important of all, policing the operators is not its main job. Its first priority will be to 'promote the development of cable systems and services', which means giving the operators maximum freedom to manoeuvre. Checking their performance and considering 'representations from the public about the services provided' comes a poor fourth.[9] Indeed, once a franchise has been awarded, the Authority is expressly directed to 'use a light regulatory touch and adopt a reactive rather than proactive style'.[10]

The forces behind cable

Leaving the development of cable to market forces strengthens and extends the power of the large companies who already dominate the communications system. Not only are local authorities barred from holding shares in cable companies, but as financial analysts are fond of pointing out, cable is a 'deep pocket' investment. Start up costs for an advanced system can run to £24-28 million, annual running costs come out at £6-9 million, and investors may not see a return for up to eight years. Faced with these figures, only groups with large cash reserves can seriously contemplate entering the market. This is already clear from the list of bidders for the 12 year interim franchises which the Government is awarding before the Cable Authority is set up, to get the system off the ground. Applications closed on August 31 and the decisions will be announced in November. These will licence up to twelve new multi channel services covering communities of not more than 100,000 households.

A domestic telephone may become a luxury that more and more pensioners and poor families will be unable to afford.

Almost all the 37 bids are from consortia made up of major companies backed up by leading merchant banks and investment groups, and the list features many of the biggest companies in the communications industries. They include: multi-media conglomerates like Thorn-EMI, Philips and BET; major hardware concerns like Plessey, GEC, Racal, Ferranti, and BT; and leading publishing and entertainment groups like Robert Maxwell's British Printing and Communications Corporation, and the Virgin music and film interests. Consortia with these kinds of 'blue chip' names are at an advantage for two reasons. Firstly, by making 'financial soundness' a major criteria for judging bids, the Home Office guidelines automatically favour the richer groups.[11] Secondly, the Economist Intelligence Unit who are acting as independent assessors are likely to give this factor a hign priority.

Although the companies selected will be responsible for running the system in the areas covered by their franchise, most of their material will be bought in from programme providers. And here again, the big media groups are well represented in the plans announced so far. Two consortia have been formed to supply film channels. United Cable Programmes is backed by the country's two main cable operators — Rediffusion and Visionhire — plus Plessey, Rank-Trident, and UIP, which represents the major Hollywood studios of Paramount, Universal and MGM/UA. The other American majors, Columbia and Fox, plus CBS and Home Box Office (America's most successful cable channel) have joined the rival group set up by Goldcrest, the film and television wing of S Pearson and Son, who publish Penguin Books and the *Financial Times*, control the country's largest chain of weekly newspapers and own 25% of Yorkshire Television. Other firm contenders for space on the new cable system are the Musicvision rock music channel (backed by Yorkshire Television), and W H Smith's proposed video games channel. Cable operators will also be able to relay the general entertainment service provided by SATV, the new pan-European satellite operation which is now controlled by Rupert Murdoch. Consequently, though cable will be locally based, it will mainly operate as an extra distribution channel for the commodities produced by the major media corporations. Community and access programmes, if they appear at all, will be very much on the margins.

Limited accessibility

However, unlike existing television services, cable systems won't be available to everyone. They will be mostly confined to places which are relatively affluent and/or easy to cable, leaving the poorer and more remote areas unserved. Moreover, even within the franchise areas, sizeable sections of the populations won't be able to afford the prices the operators will charge. It costs around £14 a month in rental and licence fees to receive existing television services. It will cost at least as much again to be connected to a cable system, which puts it well beyond the reach of people on low pay or state benefits, incomes which seem likely to fall in relative

[6] *The Future of telecommunications in Britain* p4.
[7] Cabinet Office/Information Technology Advisory Panel *Report on Cable Systems* February 1982 London HMSO p7.
[8] Home Office/Department of Industry *The Development of Cable Systems and Services* London HMSO Cmnd 8866 April 1983 p55.
[9] *Cable Systems and Services* p24.
[10] *Cable Systems and Services* p59.
[11] Home Office *Cable: Interim Licencing of Pilot Projects-Guidance Notes* July 1983 p6.

LABOURING UNDER THE LAW

The Fight for Union Rights

"LABOURING UNDER THE LAW" examines the implications of the Tories Employment Acts in the context of 150 years of trade union legislation. The film uses archive material and simple dramatised sequences as well as interviews, to illustrate the history of union struggle. An additional element is a discussion involving N.U.P.E. shop stewards, which highlights similarities between past and present anti-union laws.

Production: Trade Films
Format: Colour Video Cassette, U-matic or VHS.
Running Time: Part I 28 minutes
Part II 33 minutes

Available for sale or hire from:
The Northern Film & Television Archive,
36 Bottlebank,
Gateshead,
Tyne & Wear.
Tel: 0632 775532.

Trade Films acknowledges financial assistance from the British Film Institute and Channel Four.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

terms over the next few years anyway. In the 'new' television industries, you not only have to buy or rent extra equipment, you have to pay for everything you view, and this acts as a massive deterrent to poorer households. They have already lost out on the video revolution. Only 1% of pensioners and 3.5% of unskilled and unemployed workers have a video recorder, as against 13% of professional and managerial households.[12] They will lose out again with cable. By tying access directly to ability to pay, commercial cable increases the already sizeable gap in information and entertainment choices between rich and poor.

Many people already can't afford trips to the cinema or the price of a new book. But two factors make current developments particularly crucial. Firstly, they are happening in television which provides most people with most of their information and entertainment. Secondly, they are occurring at a time when cuts in public services are making people more dependent on television than ever, and when the mounting pressure on audiences and revenues is restricting the range of existing television services. Already the ITV companies are lobbying to be allowed to show more imported material because it is relatively cheap and some are beginning to cut back on expensive programming such as documentaries, while Channel 4 is reducing the number of independent producers it deals with and giving a higher priority to light entertainment at peak viewing times. As cable spreads these pressures will intensify, leaving the poor caught in a pincer movement, unable to buy into the new information and entertainment services and left with a basic service which offers them less choice and diversity than before. Nor is the BBC immune from pressure.

Satellite television

It has responded to the falling real value of the licence fee by adopting a more aggressive stance to selling programmes overseas, by putting more effort into marketing books, records and other spin-offs from popular programmes, and by selling technology and services to the business market. According to one executive, 'these ventures (or adventures) into profit making' extend the 'public broadcasters' mission' by making money that can be used to 'finance the development of programme services at all levels'.[13] This is a plausible enough argument, but it doesn't apply to the Corporation's latest and largest commercial venture — into satellite television.

This is a clear break with public service principles. The two satellite channels will only be available to cable subscribers or to those who can afford the £400 for a personal dish receiver and the £10 a month subscription fee. Moreover, in the short run they may well reduce diversity by taking resources away from basic programming. At the Government's insistence, the Corporation has ordered a system built by the British Unisat consortium (comprised of British Aerospace, BT and GEC-Marconi), in preference to one of the cheaper American alternatives. The venture is intended as a shopwindow for British industry, but once again the general public could end up paying. In August the Government issued a supplementary charter allowing the BBC to borrow up to £225 million on the open market to finance the project. But according to one leading analyst, the total borrowing requirement could rise to £433 million by 1989, which would put considerable pressure on the Corporation's finances and basic service.[14]

What's to be done?

The precise structures which will emerge from these various developments are difficult to predict. But the political implications need urgent consideration now. First the wholesale privatisation of communications will mean a sharp loss of accountability, transferring the public's already limited involvement in cultural policy almost entirely to the whims and powers of the large corporations. Second, despite claims to the contrary, diversity will be severely curtailed as the pressures for commercial survival intensify and exert their familiar influence on programming and other services. Third, the scale of finance required by the new communications technologies will restrict entry to those who are capable of 'deep pocket' capitalism. Far from allowing a thousand community cable stations to bloom, the field will be dominated by relatively few large corporate interests. This will effectively excludethe representation of minority interests and frustrate opportunities for them to play a significant role in the provision of communications. Finally, the trends we have outlined will inevitably extend information inequality, as greater access to technology and services for the rich reproduces and widens the gap between them, and those who have yet to enter the portals of the new communications wonderland. As the public sector declines, protection for the poor will be replaced by the dispassionate mechanisms of the market.

Our immediate response must be to oppose these trends. This will mean supporting the fight against the privatisation of BT, because of the threat it poses to less profitable but socially necessary services. After all, as dreams of hi-tech living beckon, nearly four and a quarter million households still lack a television, mainly in poorer areas. At the same time, the development of cable must not be allowed to progress at its present breakneck speed without a major attempt to open up the franchise allocation process to public scrutiny, secure statutory backing for community and access provision, and ensure that the Cable Authority is given some teeth. We must also defend the BBC's role as the major public service presence in television, while opposing the satellite project's break with the principle of universal access, and arguing for a major extension of diversity and access.

> The new communications industries pose dilemmas which strike at the core of the uncertainties in left thinking.

But beyond these immediate responses, we urgently need to reconstruct the Left's approach to communications and cultural policy and get to grips with the undemocratic, unrepresentative, and paternalistic faces of our present public institutions. This will not be easy. The new communications industries pose dilemmas which strike at the core of the uncertainties in left thinking. They highlight the latent tensions between industrial and cultural policy; between the rights of workers and the needs of users and consumers; between professionalism and public access; and between the protection of national production and development of positive internationalism. But one thing is absolutely clear. Fragmented propositions are no longer adequate to the momentum of 'deep pocket' capitalism. Behind the bland gaze of the television screen lies a political economy in full flight. Combatting it requires a response which matches the policies of the large corporations not only in scope but in imagination and popular appeal. □

[12] Mike Kirkham 'The need for VCR research' *Admap* July 1982 p405.
[13] Robin Scott 'Public Broadcasting: the changing media scene' *Intermedia* Vol 8 No 6 1980 p17.
[14] Raymond Snoddy 'The BBC's £350 m roulette wheel' *Financial Times* August 13 1983 p15.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christmas & New Year Highlight tour

In the German Democratic Republic

This year, share in the warm welcome and traditional hospitality of Christmas in the grand style—an unbeatable Highlight Tour— from Dec 22 to Jan 2. Visit some of Europe's loveliest cities and towns—modern Berlin, beautiful Dresden, famous Leipzig and the breathtaking scenery of the Erzgebirge mountains.
Travel is by coach with interpreter, accommodation in first-class and de-luxe hotels, half-board, including Christmas and New Year's celebration dinners. Flights via Gatwick.

For full details phone 01-629 1664

ONLY £225
12 DAYS inc. Flight
(Guaranteed price)
BOOK NOW

Berolina travel ltd
Tourist Office of the German Democratic Republic
Department 20, Conduit Street, London W1R 9TD
ABTA member ATOL 980B

JOURNALS FROM THE U.S.S.R. FOR 1984

BIULLETEN INOSTRANNOI KOMMERCHESKOI INFORMATSII
Russian — 156 per annum **£150.20**

FOREIGN TRADE
In Russian, English, German, French & Spanish Monthly — **£15.00**

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
In Russian, English and French — Monthly **£7.50**

LITERATURNAYA GAZETA
In Russian — Weekly **£22.80**

NEW TIMES
In Russian, English French German Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Arabic — Weekly **£6.50**

SOVIET MILITARY REVIEW
In Russian, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic and French — Monthly **£10.00**

SOVIET UNION
In Russian, English, German, Spanish, French, etc — Monthly **£5.00**

SOCIALISM, THEORY AND PRACTICE
In English, French, Spanish and German — Monthly **£4.50**

TRAVEL TO THE U.S.S.R.
In Russian, English, French and German, — 6 per annum **£5.00**

XX CENTURY AND PEACE
In English, Russian, French, German and Spanish — Monthly **£2.50**

Collet's

Write for our 1984 catalogues of Russian and East European Journals

Subscription Import Department
COLLET'S HOLDINGS LIMITED
Denington Estate, Wellingborough
Northants. NN8 2QT
Telephone: (0933) 224351

Leeds Postcards

Steve Bell's Old Masters

Postcards for your campaign
Leeds Postcards can help with design and production, and may also be interested in publishing and distribution.

Postcards for your lit. stall
Peace Groups, CLP's, Trade Councils etc. get free display box and free postage (with min. order) and extra discount for cash.

Postcards for you
Ring 0532-468649 (24 hours) for order form or send now for one of our compilation boxes. Price includes P&P + VAT. Cheques/PO to 'Leeds Postcards'.

VAT registered 387 9130 14

- ☐ Complete Works £12·90 over 130 inc. some out of print
- ☐ Leeds Latest £5·30 over 50 single cards
- ☐ Best of the Rest £4·90 over 30 from other publishers
- ☐ THE COMMON CAUSE **95p**

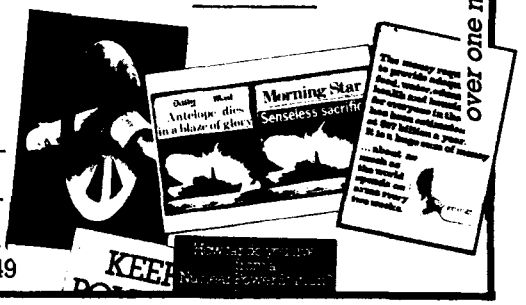
Name _____

Address _____

Women of the Peace Camps in action for THE COMMON CAUSE

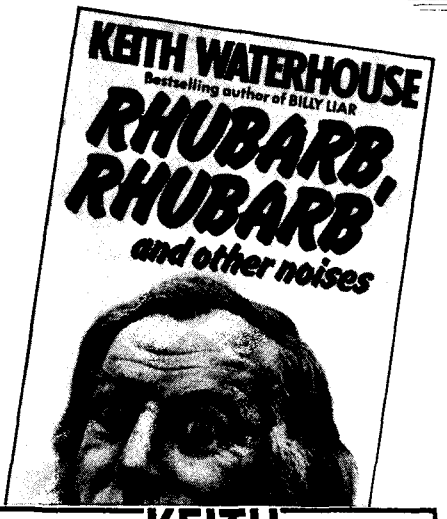
A set of eight high quality b/w photographs, bound in a pad for keeping or separate use.

over one million bright radical postcards already published



LEEDS POSTCARDS PO Box 84, Leeds LS8 1AZ telephone 0532-468649

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



KEITH WATERHOUSE

TWO things all children should be taught from birth. The first is that life isn't fair. The second is that the world is full of pains in the neck.

They will become no more prosperous for their grasp of these simple truths but they will learn not to fritter away their energies on trying to change human nature, and some of them may save on lawyers' bills.

If they are of the female persuasion, they could also save on prescription charges for cystitis, headaches, digestive problems, nausea, general physical disability and lack of resistance to infection—all of which, if you believe the TUC's women's advisory committee, may be linked to sexual harassment at work.

Victims are urged to keep diaries recording incidents of leering, ridicule, embarrassing remarks or jokes, unwelcome comments and so on, and take it up with the union. These journals should make fascinating reading at the Sexual Harassment Tribunals which—I have not the slightest doubt—will be set up across the land if the hardline feminists have their way.

★☆★

"Dear Diary, Today, while I was crossing the loading bay, a male workperson observed, 'Cor, looker that, I would not mind giving her one.' When informed by me that he would be reported, he vouchsafed, 'Give us a big fat juicy kiss'."

Among the factory girls I grew up with, the standard response to advances of this sort was either "Get off your knees, short-arse" or "It'd take a man, not his shirt," and that would be the end of the matter. But perhaps the hothouse of the women's movement is nurturing more delicate blooms these days.

I know there are workplaces where male workpersons make an intolerable nuisance of themselves towards female workpersons, but that is because they are born pests, not because—quote—"too often women workers are seen as sexually attractive objects" etc etc.

★☆★

Pests are pests are pests. They are among the routine hazards of working life like the bus always being late and the canteen chips. You cannot mandate against them any more than you can mandate against wasps at picnics.

Most of us are harassed at work. We are harassed by cigarette scroungers, holiday-snap bores, sufferers from BO, retailers of interminable jokes, borrowers of a quid till Friday, collectors for Maureen's wedding, hypochondriacs, pedants, bubble-gum chewers, smokers of horse manure, sniffers, whistlers, whiners, whingers and wet nellies—and that's before we've even got out of the lift. But we do not go to the TUC about them.

'Cor, looker that said a male work person'

Maybe we should. "Dear Diary, Today, while I was eating my onion sandwiches during dinner break, a workperson came up to me and stated, Would you like to buy a raffle ticket, only it is for the kiddies? This is the fifth time in a week and I do not think I can take much more of it."

BRITANNIA RULES, OK

BRITANNIA'S bluff was called during the Falklands campaign, when the pretence that what we had here was a hospital ship just filling in with a little light cocktail duty while waiting for a war to start was quietly dropped.

Apologists for the Royals' footing part-time palace now wish us to believe that what we really have here is a valuable export earner, since it impresses the foreign businessmen who are frequently entertained on it.

★☆★

They must be odd businessmen if they will sign a 100-million-dollar contract because they are taken with the panelling, but be that as it may—unless these are arms deals we are talking about, there seems little reason why Britannia's expensive upkeep should come out of the defence budget.

The Royal family must be embarrassed—or more likely, not in the least embarrassed—at the running costs of their undersized toy.

I have a suggestion. Both the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales are keen on yanking young troublemakers out of the slums and making men of them by getting them to climb trees and sail canoes. Why not, on its long off-duty months, turn Britannia over as a training ship for skinheads?

Interview with
KEITH WATERHOUSE

By Beatrix Campbell

Keith Waterhouse is well known for his regular column in the *Daily Mirror* and *Punch*, for his prolific writing of novels, plays and his work for the cinema. He was also instrumental in creating a new style of popular journalism at the *Mirror* in the 60s. Here he talks to Beatrix Campbell.

When you went to Fleet Street. to the Mirror, *you were one of the architects of a new style of journalism, how did that emerge?*

It was to do with the shaping of the modern Labour Party. If you boil Crosland's book down to a sentence, it is: 'we've got the bloody money now, what are we going to do with it?' *The Mirror* was very committed to this, and they were very good days for the paper: educating, informing, raising up. It's a curious thing, while Crosland was trying to pull down the grammar schools, I think the *Mirror* was trying to rebuild them. It was a time of Labour expansion and the *Mirror* responded very vividly. I was just a bit of what was going on at the *Mirror* in the 60s. Those were very optimistic days you know. You see we thought we'd got it, it was like the Northern writers coming to London, we thought we'd got literature, we'd got politics.

Since the late 60s, how far has your work been measured against the new radicals? I'm asking you because of your anti-statism, and your dislike of anything that seems to you to reproduce the working class as a dependent class. The question is in a sense about the difference between 50s socialism, or radicalism as you prefer to call it, and 60s socialism.

There's a difference between building and mending. We were building up on that solid 1945-1951 base. There's been nothing like it before or since. But it's all come tumbling down. And now, unlike previous Tory governments, which have accepted in a sanguine way the idea of a welfare state, we've got Thatcherism as an ideology. This government is as radical in its way as the Attlee government was in *its* way. Your lot, if I may put it like that, are mending — my lot were building. We had something to build. You've got the rubble.

How would you characterise the style of popular journalism embodied in the Mirror's *stylebook, which you wrote?*

It's the synthesis of a lot of talks we had had at the paper about the language of popular journalism, talking doorstep English, talking in the people's English. At that time there was still a tendency to use old film expressions. Tabloidese was invented. It got to the point where no reader could understand what journalists were talking about without having a lexicon beside them. They were using words that are not used on the street ever — like rampage. When have you ever heard a person use the word rampage, 'my lads were on the rampage last Friday . . .'? There's hundreds of them. The idea of this stylebook was to direct tabloid journalism back to street language. However it's had not the slightest effect; it's probably had more effect on trainee journalism. Street language is far more vigorous, people are inventing new words all the time, and words invented on the doorstep are far more graphic than these odd words in tabloidese. So what I was arguing was that there's a full, plain English that you ought to be able to talk in.

What is it about tabloids that makes that a problem? Is it the short words and short sentences?

Short words and short sentences lead to short *cuts* in thoughts. So it's impossible to get quite complicated thoughts over. I avoid clichés like the plague, though I have used them and feel very guilty about it. I try to express complex thoughts in as complex a way as I can.

How has that developed in the wake of the ferocious competition the Mirror's *had from the* Sun, *with the* Mirror *attempting to hang on to serious journalism, even though it's sometimes quivered and succumbed. How much have you been involved in that struggle at the* Mirror?

There was never any resolution involved. The difference between the *Mirror* and the *Sun* is that the *Mirror* has a heart, and a policy. *The Sun* hasn't, there's nothing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there. Without bedrock support for the Labour Party the *Mirror* would be adrift. It would come to pieces. The reason many people work on it, certainly the decision-makers are on it, is for that reason. It's not because they get a lot of money, though they do.

Over the past ten or fifteen years how much have you read or felt inclined to read, of the new Left, or indeed old Left.

I read everything. I read *The Grocer*, *Marxism Today*, *The Fast Food Review*, because I don't count myself as predominantly a political writer, I'm a writer about the passing show.

How do you live, a big house?

No, a little house. I did have a big house, but I'm divorced now, so I have a little house.

With people? A person?

I live with a fellow journalist, Stella Bingham, I'm not married. Grown up children.

The modern feminist is a favourite target for abuse and humour. To what extent do you think you have displaced the mother-in-law joke with a husky-voiced feminist joke?

Well, I must say she's got on the list. Every columnist is a Donald McGill really. He's got to have his set-up jokes. I'll tell you the difference between the mother-in-law joke and the feminist. The mother-in-law joke is about mothers-in-law; the feminist joke is about politics. I've been writing about women's rights for 25 years but that kind of feminism is not about feminism, it's about power.

It's obvious the way you write about feminists that they animate you. For example, Harriet Harman, you wrote about as: 'Husky voiced'. What do you really think of them?

Of course they animate me. But they're destroying the Labour Party, they're destroying Labour's chances of ever being in government again. But I don't dislike them any more than I used to dislike the old communists.

In your column do you have a catalogue of targets. Harriet Harman obviously is one target; she symbolises something for you?

I don't have standbys, I have approaches or ways of doing things. With a column like mine you can't cover an issue straight, otherwise it would read like a leading article. After all, it's a personal column. I have a number of approaches: the ironic, the satiric, and so on. Humour is a great weapon. It's not soft-selling, it's putting things in a way that might stretch the mind. You can't keep saying 'this is disgraceful, it should be stopped'. And I don't believe in simply writing about conversations I've overheard in the bar. Harriet Harman once asked a question in Parliament about government funds for play, what she wants is structuralised fun. I'm not after Harman, I'm after the Harman idea.

Your kind of radicalism from the 50s, through the 60s, is under siege now from a new kind of radicalism which you find quite alien. What do you mean by radicalism or socialism?

Well, I would have abolished the public schools before I would have abolished the grammar schools. I'd have nationalised

A challenging contribution to socialist thought

RETHINKING SOCIALISM

A THEORY FOR A BETTER PRACTICE

GAVIN KITCHING

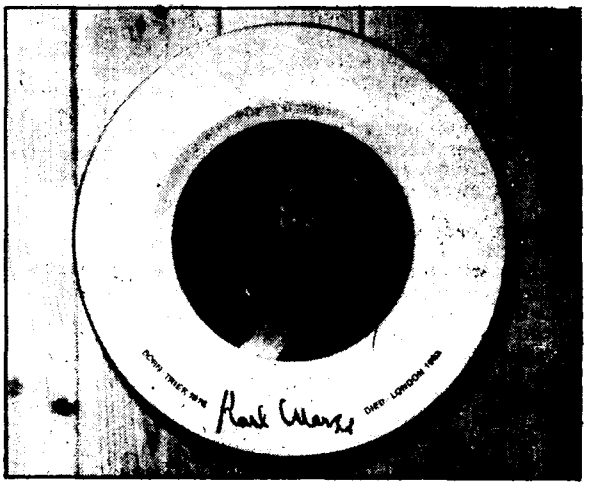
Socialism is unpopular in Britain. The Left needs new ideas and fresh approaches if it is ever to escape its isolation from the mainstream of political and cultural life. Gavin Kitching contends that the unpopularity of the Left is *not* due primarily to the pernicious influence of the press and media, as many socialists argue, but reflects fundamental changes in the British social structure and, above all, the simple incredibility and irrelevance of many socialist beliefs and policies. He also claims that socialism will continue to be unpopular so long as it is divorced from the values and concerns of the majority of British people.

This book should be read by everyone who wants to see an alternative to Thatcherite Britain.

176 pages Paperback 0 416 35840 3 £3.95

METHUEN 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

The life and work of Karl Marx, who died in London in March 1883, has inspired the production of this handsome, gold-rimmed English china centenary plate. Packed and sent to you for only £17.50 in UK, incs. p. and p.



Laboromnia Ltd.

15 Wallingford Avenue, London W10 6QA
Tel: 01-703 0833

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pharmaceuticals, I'd have nationalised the banks, (particularly my own) but most of all I would have made education inviolate. I don't care if people grow bearded and rich in polytechnics. Education is the ladder.

You've got a very moral view of socialism, you're a moralist aren't you.

Yes, I'm tin-roof chapel, tabernacle. I think there's a duty upon us to help one another. Now you could put that on a Sunday school postcard and it would frame my beliefs.

So it's all about stopping people sinking or starving.

Yes, so that people can level up.

You are quite sceptical about pre-war nostalgia — you believe very strongly in the benefits of the welfare state and the 1944 Education Act for the working class, but often reading your stuff there's also a tone of 'when we were lads we were climbing trees we weren't being entertained by bearded community workers'. But your memories don't seem to be full of gleeful street life.

My early memories are, but not the later ones when we moved to another estate, Middleton.

You wanted out — what did you want out of, and what did you want into?

I wanted up. I still want everybody up.

You've collaborated in much of your TV and film work with Willis Hall. What's the basis of that combination?

What we combined on was the Coronation Street North really, though what I grew up on was more the Jubilee Crescent, the streets round me were all called things like Windermere Crescent. Willis Hall came from a more closely knit family, too. We speak shorthand. It's been sort of on and off collaboration. Collaboration is compromise and for that reason it's exhausting. If you're working alone you can do other things, write letters or something. We used to play games; Monopoly, Scrabble. And somebody would get an idea, or the next line of dialogue . . . It's very exhausting because you're locked in with somebody else. And you've got a responsibility to each other. Collaborations do break up eventually because you don't have the freedom or the time to think yourself.

TELEVISED FOOTBALL

David Berry and Steve Pinder

This season sees a new agreement between the football authorities and television. League matches of Britain's most popular spectator sport will be televised live. The relationship between British football and TV has been stormy and this could be the death-knell. For football is a dying TV sport that live coverage might finally destroy.

The first televised game — the 1938 FA Cup Final — was live. 93,357 people packed Wembley to see Preston beat Huddersfield 1-0. About 9,000 watched it on TV. Last season's final went out live and was watched by over 14 million in this country. 100,000 saw it at Wembley. But, apart from special matches, TV coverage hasn't been all that successful. In 1960, the embryonic ITV companies won the right to show a number of live games. The first match, Blackpool vs Bolton, was so dire and attendance so poor that other clubs refused to cooperate and the deal fell through.

Out of this came a compromise that lasted till last season — special matches like Cup Finals, where a full crowd and excitement are virtually guaranteed, could go out live, but the more regular and mundane fixtures, would be shown as *highlights*. The 1966 World Cup, held in England, rocketed attendances *and* viewing figures and the 70s saw the industry grow, with pundits and savants providing expert analysis to back up the commentator. The division between televised soccer and the local match also grew — previews on Friday nights and Saturday lunchtimes, games from around the world and instant teleprinted results all produced a television package. So a game that had, before television, been the preserve of the working class male became the purlieu of all, whose brief glimpses of Best, Law, Greaves and Keegan, turned them into experts with no need to visit the grounds.

But in the late 70s, viewing figures declined. The BBC *Match of the Day* switched to Sunday afternoon last year, by agreement with ITV. And the switch revealed that the very large viewing figures *Match* got a couple of years ago, were as much a product of careful Saturday night

Dan Maskell

MATCH OF THE DAY

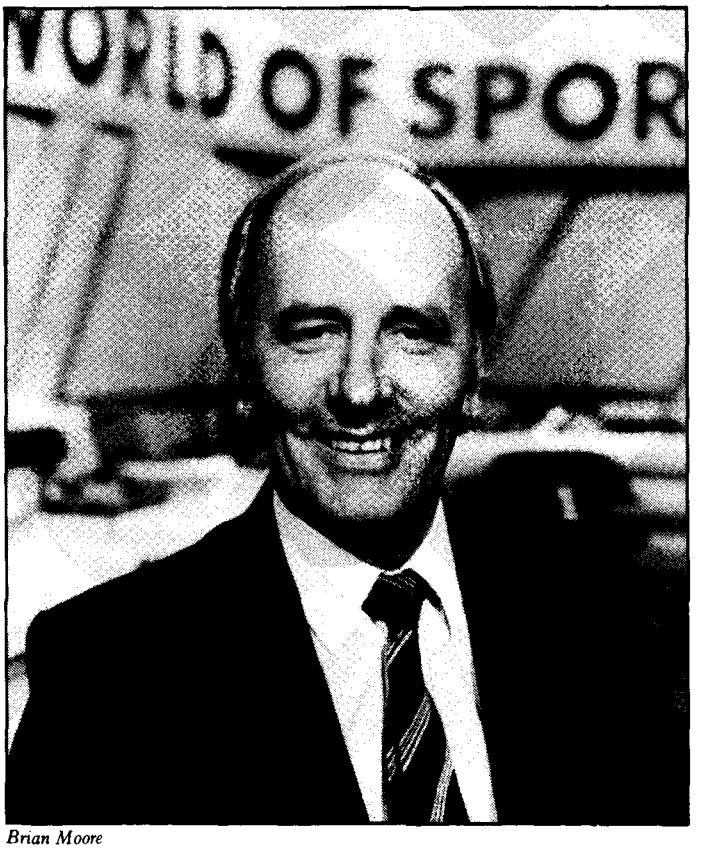
scheduling as of the attraction of the game. Many people see live coverage of the League as the last desperate fling to regain lost audiences.

In fact, covering a game live is easier for television. There's no video-editing which saves money and time. Only one additional camera is needed to the six usually present for a highlighted match and that's just for on-the-spot interviews. There isn't any need to rethink the style of coverage since special games have always been televised live. Football will continue to be shown in the *realistic* mode. QUANTEL technology (splitting the screen) which is so effective in cricket and golf, is unlikely to be used. As the professionals claim, it's like being there. But, of course, it isn't. Television concentrates on action — goals and fouls — and the game is both more interesting and more boring than it appears on TV.

The main problem of televising football is simply that the pitch is too big. It can't be shot as a whole — unlike a tennis court or a snooker table. Football is also a fast game — unlike golf — and so often camerapeople lose the main object of their attention: the ball. Hence the need for so many cameras. This means that the actual game is 'bad TV' whereas the razzmatazz is great television.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jimmy Hill



Brian Moore

Until this season, football has been covered on television as a carefully-contrived media package. And essential to this package has been the commentators. The football commentators employed by the TV companies are a mixture of sport journalists and 'experts' — former players or managers. It is worth looking at examples here because the sound-track that goes with the game is the most obvious distinction between going to a match and watching it on the box. Most viewers, as with royal occasions, choose to watch their sport on BBC. Sport is one of the few televised programmes for the BBC gets higher viewing figures than ITV. For football, the BBC relies on two ex-players who have made the transition from expert comments to regular journalism. Interestingly enough, neither Bob Wilson nor Jimmy Hill were world-class players in their time. Now their commentary contributes to what is seen in TV circles as the best football coverage in the world.

Wilson, an Arsenal goalkeeper till recently, and Hill, ex-Fulham rather longer ago, have an analytic rather than a descriptive style. Hill will take a player who may not have scored a goal, or laid on that vital pass, and explain to the viewer why he has made a vital contribution to the game. Wilson will give the background to the game and introduce special features on clubs or players. In contrast, ITV coverage relies much more heavily on the journalism of Brian Moore. It is no surprise, then, that the BBC is more popular because the coverage is more mediated and the mediation is essential for the game to make 'good TV'.

Football commentating is a tough job and is often, like most sport journalism, a part-time activity or a stepping stone to higher, more prestigious work. Hill is an active power in the game itself and the new TV football star, Jimmy Greaves, has already moved from football to TVAM and his own sport series for Central TV.

With all this television attention to detail and packaging, it is no wonder that even a middle-of-the-table clash could be made interesting viewing. A predominantly local sport, thanks to television, could be made attractive all over the country. At the same time, as ground attendances dropped (obscurely enough a larger drop under Tory governments than Labour), TV seemed to capture the missing millions.

But the staple diet for the millions of football viewers in the 70s wasn't live football. Anthony Crosland was one viewer who, despite their loved one's protest, would let nothing interfere with his 45 minute fix each week. But would he have watched three hours? The experience of watching an ordinary live game is of long periods of boredom punctuated by a possible spell of brilliance. With no crowd behind the viewer and no team loyalty, will the viewers take a chance on that spell happening? More likely the competing attractions of the other three channels will win out — especially if any argument with other people in the home is on-the-cards. *Match* worked because it was short and sweet and could be part of a Saturday night with friends.

For the next nine months, football will be part of most men's television. There will be the usual complaints about too much televised soccer and, next year, there will be another unholy scramble between the football authorities and the TV companies for a new deal. Cliff Morgan, head of BBC Sport, said last year that he could imagine the BBC pulling out of football coverage and this is more realistic than it sounds. Football needs TV more than vice versa. Without television, it would lose all the major sponsorship of which the new Canon League and the Milk Cup are just immediate examples. Football's popularity as a spectator sport is decreasing and the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

League authorities desperately hope that live football on TV will encourage back the missing millions. However, according to Chris Lightbown, live football will put people off: 'We go to football to capture a dream — the dream of seeing that moment of skill we remember all our lives. Live TV will show people it's not on'.

The usual fantasy of League officials is that TV has destroyed the old addiction to watch the game. But the opposite is more likely. TV coverage has kept football in peoples' minds and it is worth asking how much the TV companies have listened to nostalgia, rather than hard economics, when they have made deals with football authorities. Without the box, it is a minority sport. Television has stemmed for a while the decline of popular interest in the game. But when a new generation of television producers emerges — a generation that hasn't been brought up to go to soccer every Saturday afternoon — it is unlikely that they will treat football as generously. For the vast crowds that turned up to matches this century came from a leisure sociology that no longer exists. Going to a match was a working man's Saturday afternoon. For football has always been an anti-family game. It excludes women. The sports that are increasing in popularity — racket sports, running, darts, snooker, golf etc — are all games that rely on individual performance and can be played by men and women together. And they're much easier to organise.

TV has created the image that football dominates sports coverage. In fact, there has only been an average of two hours per week on each channel. Over a year, football will receive less actual playing time on TV than snooker or cricket or tennis. As a game, football is under rather than over-exposed.

It seems very likely that the development of televised sport in the next decade will be *indoors*. The difficulty with outside sport events for television is their unpredictability. And, although there is no intrinsic reason why football should not be played in covered stadia — as it is beginning to be in the USA — the conservatism of the football authorities will surely prevent this happening here. The point is that most people in football live on forgotten dreams and bad marketing practices in which TV has connived. Football has had a good deal from British TV; with current feelings in television, the next few years might change this. Live coverage could be the beginning of the end.

POLITICAL THEATRE

David Edgar

David Edgar, the playwright, (left) and Ron Daniels, the director, at the RSC's Maydays *rehearsal*

David Edgar's new play MAYDAYS — which opens at the Royal Shakespeare Company's Barbican Theatre on 30 October — contains a controversial analysis of the successes and failures of the New Left in Britain since the late 50s. Here he sets out the context.

It seems to me that the development of political theatre in Britain since the late 60s has followed an unusually parallel course to the development of the left politics to which it aspired to contribute. In the past — with the shining exception of George Bernard Shaw — political playmakers have tended to seek forms which place a certain distance between their work and the society around it; most of Brecht's great plays, for instance, are set in the near or distant past, and this applies, too, to the work of John Arden and Edward Bond. Other political playwrights have sought to discuss contemporary politics through analogy (Arthur Miller, Peter Weiss), allegory (Max Frisch, Friedrich Durrenmatt) or personal autobiography (Arnold Wesker). The late 60s, in contrast to the 50s and the 30s, was one of the few periods this century when the natural hostility between the cultural and the political *avant garde* appeared, for a moment at least, to break down. Perhaps for that reason, contemporary British political theatre — the whole network of writers, directors, performers and theatre groups which mushroomed in the wake of the abolition of theatre censorship in 1968 — have by contrast to their predecessors made plays set firmly in the present tense, which sought to intervene directly and unambiguously in the political debates of the contemporary world.

Thus, in the last years of the 60s, the infant political theatre movement reflected the fragile unity that existed between the various forms of the New Left, as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

differences were sunk in the interests of the struggle against the Vietnam war. While hippies and yippies, funkies and tankies demonstrated and even worked together (with only the Socialist Labour League perpetually announcing Why They Were Not Marching), the equally disparate branches of the theatrical *avant-garde* (from performance artists to social-realists to agit-propagators) felt artistically and politically at one in the project of undermining the cultural assumptions on which imperialism was based.

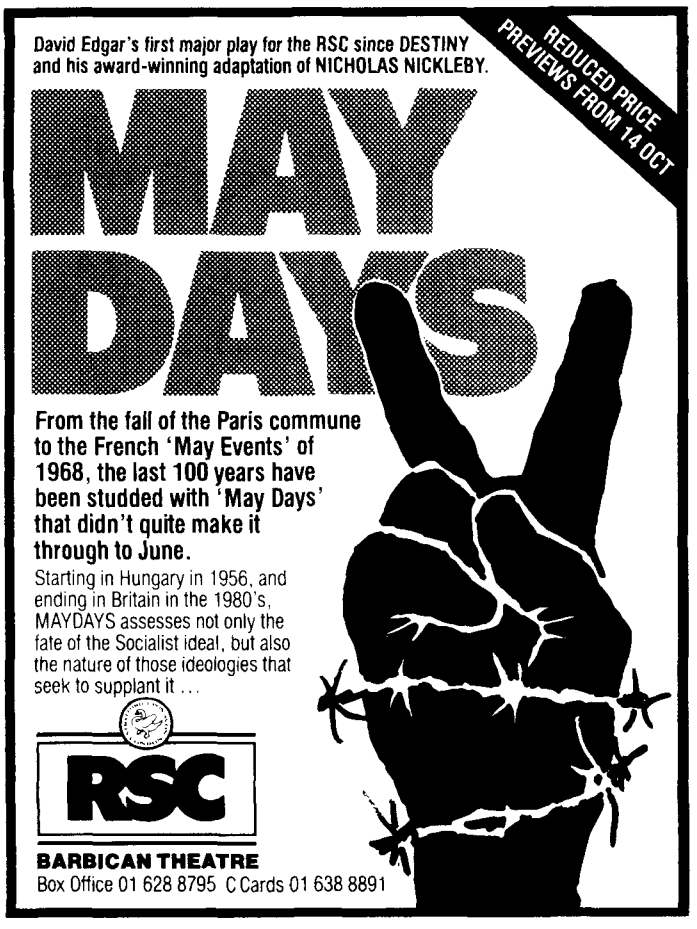
In the early 70s, however, this unity fragmented. Like the burgeoning Trotskyite groups, some political playmakers saw the working class militancy of the Heath years as a spectacular confirmation of the traditional Marxist analysis, and the traditional Leninist prescriptions. Others, like the libertarian and anarchist groups, were attracted to increasingly radical forms of social experimentation, posing a dramatic challenge to traditional forms and hierarchies in the here-and-now. And, as the counter-cultural underground became progressively disillusioned with the notion of political change *per se*, so performance art retreated into its own, separated circuits, sustained by its own devotees.

Nor was political theatre immune from the confusions and contradictions that came to a head in 1975. Less than 18 months passed between the bringing down of Edward Heath and his incomes policy, and the successful imposition of Wilson's equally stringent pay-norm. This defeat was in itself a mocking reminder of the Left's spectacular failure to win a majority for withdrawal from the EEC. And the victory of the Vietnamese revolution, followed quickly by the catastrophe of Kampuchea, contained in its way as brutal an ambiguity as the cataclysmic events of 19 years before.

But there were happier contradictions. The left parties may have been severely demoralised by the Common Market referendum, but at the same time a highly moralised women's movement was leading a successful mass campaign against the James White amendments to the Abortion Act. And while the aristocrats of labour may have withdrawn from the commanding heights of the industrial struggle, Asian and black workers were demonstrating, in the sweatshops of the East Midlands and elsewhere, that they were not prepared to kowtow to exploitation just because a Labour government was in power.

The growing importance of social rather than purely economic issues — particularly, feminism and anti-racism — was reflected in the political theatre of the late 70s. In the same way that, despite the amazingly propitious circumstances of the previous decade, the Left was forced in the mid-70s to acknowledge its failure to create a mass-revolutionary movement, so political playmakers had to confront the fact that, under the same promising conditions, they had not succeeded in building a mass, working class audience for socialist theatre. And it was, as they say, no coincidence that at a time when the energies of the Left were devoted primarily to fighting oppression rather than exploitation, women's and black theatre emerged as the most politically (and artistically) radical form of political theatre towards the end of the decade. Particularly, the new feminist theatre drew on the lessons of alternative cabaret to find and develop forms of performance which broke decisively with the increasingly arid traditions of conventional political agit-prop. And by doing so it discovered that while political theatre

David Edgar's first major play for the RSC since DESTINY and his award-winning adaptation of NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.
REDUCED PRICE PREVIEWS FROM 14 OCT
MAY DAYS
From the fall of the Paris commune to the French 'May Events' of 1968, the last 100 years have been studded with 'May Days' that didn't quite make it through to June.
Starting in Hungary in 1956, and ending in Britain in the 1980's, MAYDAYS assesses not only the fate of the Socialist ideal, but also the nature of those ideologies that seek to supplant it ...
RSC
BARBICAN THEATRE
Box Office 01 628 8795 C Cards 01 638 8891



FOR A LIMITED SEASON ONLY
The Triumphant Return
of the Market Theatre, Johannesburg production of
STALLS FROM £3.90
WOZA ALBERT!
"A dazzling fireworks display lighting up the night ... the best political theatre I have ever seen" Times Ed. Sup.
Box Office 01.930 3216 Credit Cards 01.379 6565
Criterion Theatre

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Channel Five

may have failed to find a mass working class audience, it had nonetheless a potentially huge following within and around the socialist movement, from those very public sector, educational and media employees who were at the same time flocking to join the Labour Party, and who were obsessed with the question of how their daily personal and professional life could and should relate to their political beliefs.

If this parallelism has any significance beyond the anecdotal, it seems to me clear that the present role of political theatre should be not to evade but to confront the knotty and disturbing questions which now face the Left and the labour movement as a whole. Theatre has an obvious potential to celebrate those collectivist, egalitarian and fraternal ideals which have suffered such a brutal mauling since May 1979. But it also can, I think, contribute to the much soberer business of political reassessment which faces us in the wake of June 1983. Dramatic fiction has one unique advantage over all other forms of political discourse, which is its capacity to present, at one and the same time, an analysis of historical events and the subjective responses of the real human beings who participate in them. The question of political motive, of the relationship of socialists to socialism, so long ignored as the grossest manifestation of petit-bourgeois idealism, appear now to be matters of crucial significance in the struggle to find forms of socialism that can become, indeed, the common sense of the age. They are questions, furthermore, which the theatre is peculiarly well fitted, not to answer, but at least to ask.

My own play *Maydays* seeks to address these questions through the metaphor of defection, from left to right, and from East to West. It is of course by no means the first play to confront the fate of the socialist ideal in the latter half of the century (nor, I may say, the first to do so in a large conventional theatre). I see it as part of a tradition which begins with the work of Arnold Wesker and David Mercer, and goes on to embrace plays as various as Trevor Griffiths' *Occupations*, Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*, David Hare's *Fanshen* and Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*. But, having said that, I should admit that it is new for me to draw as extensively as this play does, if not on my own life, then at least on the collective biography of my generation. And no one who seeks to present the history of the postwar Left honestly can fail to be nervous of the consequences.

But I think that for socialist theatre to evade these questions, to become no more than a cheerleader for the diminished and demoralised, would be to renege on its past. In the early 70s, I and hundreds of other political playmakers saw ourselves primarily as servicing agents of the then vibrant and robust labour movement. Our task, we felt, was to present a socialist analysis in an entertaining and accessible way, to perform the literal function of a living newspaper, a leaflet standing up. The tasks that now face socialists are more complex and indeed more sombre: not only to analyse the world outside, but to reassess, internally, our whole strategy of change. As Stuart Hall pointed out at the inaugural meeting of the Socialist Society, we can no longer rely on the comfortable notion that socialism is 'a kind of empty space in which all lines *must* inevitably converge'. The absence of such cosy certainties should be the starting point of the debate that is now beginning, in which socialist artists should and must participate, and to which I hope my play will make a modest contribution.

The City of Capital

JERRY COAKLEY & LAURENCE HARRIS

To most people the workings of the City – its banks, insurance companies and stockbrokers – are a closed book, hidden behind myths and jargon they cannot penetrate. Yet its power is enormous.

Two leading Marxist economists here show how the City has responded to demands for change, partly in response to external pressures and recent 'scandals'. They conclude with suggestions for further major changes.

224 pages, hardback **£17.00** (0 631 12805 0)
paperback **£6.50** (0 631 13363 1)

Basil Blackwell

WOODWIND AND BRASS

Musical Instruments

by the world's leading makers

Full range of accessories
Repairs and servicing on the premises
Rentals to schools and authorities

BILL LEWINGTON LTD
144 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE
LONDON WC2H 8HN
TELEPHONE 01-240 0584

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Spotlight

NO GO MUSIC

Chris Bohn

Since I last entered *No Go* its situation has changed quite perceptibly. I am not only referring to the continuing economic slide precipitating its spread outwards, but to the increasing numbers of discontents who choose to settle there.

The *No Go* I'm talking about is a loose grouping of art extremists and musicians — Berlin's Einstürzende Neubauten, South London's Test Dept, New Zealand and Chinese expatriates' SPK, the various Foetus mutations and, closer to the public's heart, Birthday Party (defunct), Soft Cell's Marc Almond and the Mute label — whose work isolates them from the mainstream and its rewards, therefore forcing them to find accommodation in the ruins of industrialism. Fittingly it is from these selfsame ruins that they draw both their tools and imagery. Added to the conventional armoury of guitars and electronics are rubble, axle springs, old boilers, burnt out wrecks, twisted shards of steel, sheet metal, mallets, sledgehammers, black and deckers, pneumatic road drills — anything that comes to hand.

The music they create verges on total noise, out of which — depending of course on the group participating — emerges new sounds and rhythms dictated by the resonant quality of the metal beaten and the weight of the percussive tool applied. Equally important is the spectacle of the event. Inherent in the sight of musicians hammering out an unholy row with work tools is the mockery of a work ethic of decreasing relevance in an age of increasing unemployment and automation. But the sheer heaviness of their labour implies this is no dilettantish dabbling.

One could easily make a case for these people being the successors to 1977 punk as annihilating angel, as a medium for venting disgust but their effect on the arena they're working in — ostensibly pop music — is of the most immediate importance. Especially now, when pop has become so self-referential, its language limited to the direst denominator youth-speak and its practitioners terribly inhibited by the pressure to sound 'young'. Like never before the pop industry and its service media are openly colluding in the creation of a never-never kiddie world grounded in the spent myths of a swinging 60s. Chart groups such as Wham! and Joboxers muddle together silly self assertive anthems supported by a powder puff tough 'hard times' look inspired by Brando, Dean, Cagney's Angels With Dirty Faces.

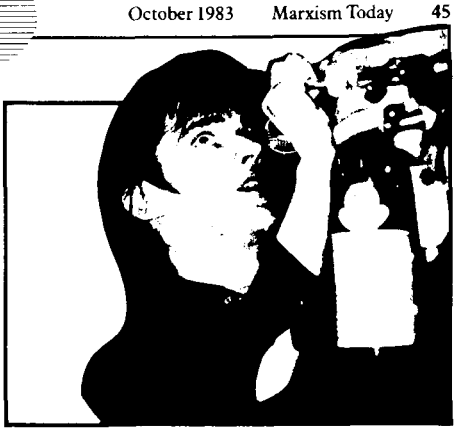
The pop industry will go along with this nonsense so long as it pays off, but at the same time it is more aware of these groups' myopia than they themselves are. Hence it will keep a wary eye on the farsightedness of the fringes. It is always willing to venture *No Go*, if only so far. After The Sex Pistols, Soft Cell and Boy George, the industry has learnt to appreciate the selling power of something it might not like or understand.

Unfortunately, even though they've been steeled by years spent *No Go*, not all groups are resistant to the corroding effects of commerce. Already you can hear metal dancing in a way it never did before. Funk and disco motifs slip in beneath gusts of bleak noise where once they'd have been immediately shrivelled by them. Being expert strategists the groups who grew up *No Go* will always manage to justify any pact they might make with the mainstream (tackling the beast from the inside and so on), but something inevitably gets lost in the deal, namely that raw edge, that fiercely uncompromising spirit which was their initial pulling power.

More positively the mainstream is currently being enriched by the superbly controlled rhythm noise of Test Dept, the disco/metal fusions of SPK and, best of all, the occasional collaborations between Soft Cell's Marc Almond and Foetus. And getting too precious about metal would be to deny the wit of Düsseldorf's Die Krupps' *Stahlwerksynfonie* and the soon to be released metal forgeries of their excellent successors Propaganda.

Still, the romantics amongst us note with alarm the speed with which some of the *No Go* groups have compromised their original vision on contact with the industry, if for no other reason than that it makes things harder for so uncompromising a group as Einstürzende Neubauten (Collapsing New Buildings), who have managed to score themselves a pressing and distribution deal with Virgin Recores, via the more adventurous Some Bizzare label, *without* underscoring their all consuming noise with a dance beat.

At the centre of Einstürzende Neubauten's art is a gigantic black hole exerting



a powerful magnetic force, drawing towards it people who want to peek into the abyss. At its heart is the group's vocalist and lyricist Blixa Bargeld directly addressing himself to a subject that pains him most: the debasement of language by a careless pop media willing to sell itself by selling itself short.

Consequently he writes in a richly allusive, if fragmented, German and delights in puns and multiple meanings. One of his best songs — and certainly the best song written this year — called *Die Genau Zeit* (Exact Time) bravely and precociously draws a direct analogy between the banter of pop records bleating out a 4/4 time and the deliberately regulated banality of the Nazi period by making a play on record turntable speeds and key dates in German history. 'Between 33 and 45' Blixa intones to the harrowing sound of collapsing buildings, '. . . or keeping regular . . . it's a question of volume . . . and . . . everything's the same . . . soon.'

For the moment the *No Go* zones provide late ghettoes of resistance against pop's levelling lowest denominator tendency. Escape or escapism? If they fall there will no longer be a choice.

A *No Go* playlist:
Einstürzende Neubauten: *Strategien Gegen Architektur* (Mute compilation of early releases)
Einstürzende Neubauten: *Brand* (working title of new LP to be released this month on Some Bizzare/Virgin)
SPK: *Dekompositiones* (Side Effekts 12" EP)
Foetus Over Frisco: *Custom Built For Capitalism* (Self Immolation Records 12")
Marc Almond/Foetus: *A Million Manias* (from Marc And The Mambas' 'Torment And Toreros' double LP on Some Bizzare)
Test Dept: *Efficiency* (from touch cassette magazine 'Meridians I')
Die Krupps: *Fair Day's Pay For A Fair Day's Work* 12" and *Stahlwerksynfonie* LP (Zickzack, available from Rough Trade)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FACING 1984

A weekend of socialist debate and discussion on political and economic aspects of the British crisis, including **Stuart Holland MP** and **Ernest Mandel** debating "Economic Strategy for European Labour".

Other speakers include:
Ken Livingstone; Unmesh Desai; Joy Hurcombe; Andrew Gamble; Doreen Massey; John Harrison; Jenny Bourne; Alan Freeman; Valerie Coultas; John Ross.

October 29/30 at Kingsway Princeton College, Sidmouth St., off Grays Inn Rd, London WC1.

Registration costs £5 for the weekend (but only £4 if you book in advance), £2.50 for one day.
Send cheque payable to *International* at PO Box 50, London N1.

THE OTHER BOOKSHOP

328 Upper Street London N1
Telephone 01 226 0571

For red books, black books, peace books, feminist books, left books, story books, labour books, cook books, kids books, Irish books, African books, Asian books, American books, gay books, soviet books, old books, new books . . . Mail order (including overseas) and bookstall service provided.
Open Mon/Tues/Sat 10-6, Wed 12-7, Thur/Fri 11-7.

Special Offer...

Free Copy

subscribe now and get Health or Anti-nuclear issue free!

Send only £4 for four issues to:
Science for People
9 Poland St., London W1 3DG
SfP...
a socialist view of science and technology

INDEPENDENT LABOUR PUBLICATIONS

Labour Leader

Labour's independent monthly:
Annual subscription £3.50.

Special October issue includes free YTS supplement: THE YOUTH TRAINEE.

Write to: Labour Leader,
49 Top Moor Side, Leeds LS11 9LW

Booksellers Classifieds

● **For a list of radical bookshops in Britain, send a s.a.e. to: Federation of Radical Booksellers, c/o Oakleaf Books, 109 Church St, Wolverton, Milton Keynes.**

London

● **Economists Bookshop** Clare Market, Portugal St WC2. Tel (3-5pm weekdays) 01-405 5531. Specialising in the social sciences, including socialist and feminist studies. Magazines. Pamphlets. Second-hand department.

● **Collet's London Bookshop** 64 Charing Cross Rd , WC2 08B. For books, journals and pamphlets on all aspects of the Labour Movement, Trade Unionism, Industrial Relations, Marxism and left wing politics, Social Sciences, Third World, Gay and Feminist Politics, Aesthetics. General paperbacks. (Tel 836-6306)

● **Collet's International Bookshop,** 129 Charing Cross Rd , WC2 0EQ. General books, especially paperbacks, also specialising in Political Sciences, Peace, Feminism, E.F.L., Russian and Slavonic books and journals (in Russian and English from the USSR) Travel, Radical Book Bargains. Records Department: Classical, including Melodiya, Folk. Posters and Badges. Film and Media Section. (Tel 734-0782/3)

● **Collet's Penguin Bookshop** 52 Charing Cross Rd , WC2 0BB. Large stocks of Penguins, Pelicans and Puffins. New and secondhand. (Tel 836-2315)

● **Collet's Chinese Bookshop,** 40 Great Russell St , WC1B 3PJ. Books, Works of art, Prints, Cards, Porcelain, Embroideries and other craft from and on China. (Tel 580-7538)

● **The Other Bookshop** 328 Upper St N1. Tel 01-226 0571. For all your radical, feminist, radical black and third world literature. Open Mon/Tues/Sat 10-6 Wed 12-7 Thurs/Fri 11-7.

● **Bookmarks** 265 Seven Sisters Rd N4. North London's leading socialist bookshop. Two floors of good books and pamphlets.

● **Hammersmith Books** Over 100,000 out-of-print titles. A world-wide mail order service since 1948. We buy books, too. Barnes High St, SW13. Tel 01-876 7254.

South

● **Nick Spurrier,** 79 Whitstable Rd, Canterbury, Kent CT2 8EA. Tel 62764. Monthly lists of 2nd hand books on trade unions, Soviet Union, socialism, economic history. Books searched for.

● **In Other Words** 38 Mannamead Road, Mutley, Plymouth tel (0752) 663889. The South West's new alternative bookshop. Mail order a specialty.

● **The Odd Volume,** 53 Upper Gloucester Road, Brighton (27845). New & second-hand books on politics, history, feminism, third world, philosophy & literature. Open Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30. Regular lists issued of s-hand & out-of-print titles; latest sent on request.

Scotland

● **Clyde Books** 292 High St , Glasgow. Tel 041-552-4699. We are a progressive bookshop specialising in books for the Labour and Trade Union Movement.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF INDIA
CIVILIZATION & CAPITALISM 15th-18th CENTURY
Fernand Braudel
The Wheels of Commerce

THE CAMBRIDGE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF INDIA
Volume 1 c.1200-c.1750
(edited by) Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib
Cambridge University Press £42.50 1982
ISBN 0 521 22692 9

CIVILISATION AND CAPITALISM 15th-18th CENTURY
Volume 2 The Wheels of Commerce
Fernand Braudel
Collins 1982 £17.50 *ISBN 0 00 216132 X*

The works on Indian History by Tapan Raychaudhuri and Irfan Habib are already widely known and Habib's *Agrarian System of Mughal India* is a classic of Marxist scholarship. As frequently occurs the writing of serious Marxist history on the subcontinent attracts the hostility of the Hindu and Muslim communalists and Habib has been the target for an unpleasant campaign at the Aligarh Muslim University, where he lectures. Nonetheless several chapters of this volume are models of historical science and will be required reading for years to come.

The aim of the Cambridge study is to present an up to date analysis of the social and economic life of India from c 1200 to 1750 including agriculture, the urban economy, finance, the maritime trades and the standard of living, roughly split between north and south India, with the divisions of the Sultanate, the Mughal Empire and Vijayanagara as convenient hinges. It is a work on the grand scale and the coherence of the volume is enhanced by the large part of the text written by the editors, who have paid serious attention to the structure and to the use of theoretical work to strengthen the analysis.

The main analysis of the work centres upon the processes of production, extraction and consumption of surpluses, which meant of course primarily agricultural surpluses. There is a detailed explanation of how state power was organised and how the surpluses were appropriated and distributed. The contradictions generated within the system which led to the crises of the Mughals are handled with considerable skill and take us into a different world from the caste and religious explanations of the communal historians. The authors emphasise the crucial importance of the state which was 'created by and largely existed for acts of conquest' which spread its power in the 16th and 17th centuries over northern and central India pressing ever harder on the resources of the country. Created in the aftermath of the defeat of the Sultanate, the Empire was ruled by a tiny class with 'an almost primitive urge to consume and acquire', a class whose 'economism was simple, straightforward and almost palpable'. Those who controlled the state made it into 'an insatiable Leviathan: its impact on the economy was defined above all by its unlimited appetite for resources'. There were five attendants for each of the 8-9,000 elephants of Delhi and Agra, an army of 4.7 million, huge numbers of slaves, dependent artisans and retainers, and the total military establishment and hangers-on has been estimated at 26 million persons for the early 17th century.

State power was erected on a land tenure and taxation system that made the total Mughal revenue demand '50% or more of the gross produce of the land'. It went in the first instance to a handful of nobles (jagirdars): 445 of these received 61.5% of revenue in 1647,before distribution to the Emperor, administrators and army. The jagirdars had few local ties, if any, and were frequently transferred. With the revenue due to the state tending to rise over time, the only way for the jagirdars to expand income was to increase the degree of expropriation.

By the later 17th century the pressures to maximise revenue and the extent of the empire's commitments, 'involved the Mughal ruling class in a deepening conflict with the two major agrarian classes below the Jagirdars'. 'There was no containing it (the Empire) until it collapsed under the weight of its own contradictions'. The pressures on the state and the byzantine complexity of the rural class system, the layering of the peasant stratas, and the regional complications are discussed with great lucidity by Raychaudhuri.

Contributors are aware of how far historical thinking has shifted from Eurocentrism, and have been largely successful in avoiding the problems associated with using the extensive Western archives. The sections on foreign and inland trade before and after 1500 give Indian trade patterns the attention they deserve, and include much on specific trades and the enormous scale of the networks of some of these Asian merchants, compared with which the capital resources of pre-18th century Western trading companies are correctly described as 'puny'.

Most of the volume will repay study, whether the object of interest is methodological, middle eastern or Asian history. There are weaknesses, with a couple of sections on south India suffering from a surfeit of American jargon. They would have been better left to the Soviet scholar who has contributed two excellent chapters on production. Indeed, more could have been made of Soviet work, though the editors recognise that historical and archaeological work has much to gain from cooperation between Soviet, Indian (and Chinese) scholars. The volume is a further indictment of the Sloane Ranger view of Indian history, and Raychaudhuri, Habib and their publishers are to be congratulated.

Fernand Braudel's *Wheels of Commerce* is less likely to upset the obscurantist clerics. It forms the second part of his three volume work on Civilisation and Capitalism from the 15th to the 18th century, the first section of which has been translated as the *Structures of Everyday Life*, an earlier form of which was published as *Capitalism and Material Life*. As a member of the *Annales* school Braudel has used narrative history illuminated with insights from the social sciences, and his work has long been of interest to Marxists. He discusses several of Marx's contributions to history, and brings in numerous other writers, including Lenin, Sombart, Weber, Febvre and Pirenne. It should be stressed that this is not really an introductory text; it is one to digest slowly, taking time over the various theses and linkages.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The work revolves around exchange relations, trade and markets, with attention paid to the different levels of trade, of village, towns and regions, and there is material on pedlars, stock exchanges, trading profits and balances, and domestic as well as international trade. The range is worldwide and as one might expect it is especially strong on Portugal, Spain, Italy and France, and as this is Braudel, the discourse includes a cast of thousands. Many sections are illuminating, his use of Marx in the discussion of the decline of feudalism is one such as is his account of the development of capitalist agriculture and wage labour.

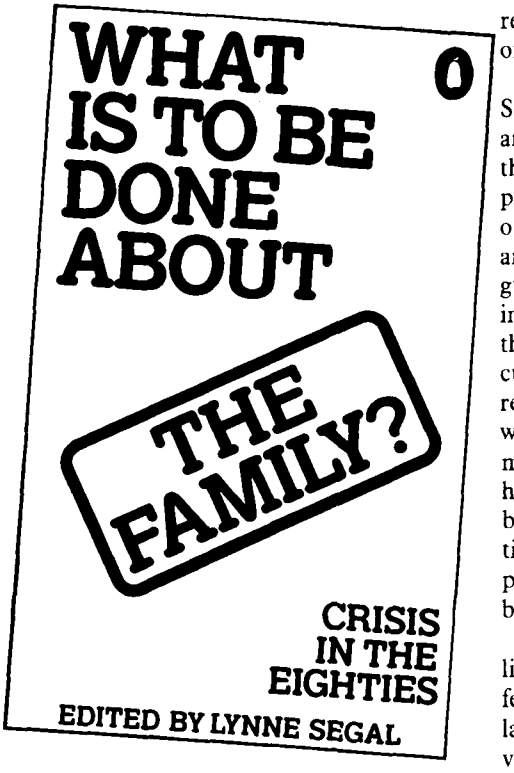
But there are also problems. It is not always clear exactly what Braudel is attempting to explain. The unfolding of a discourse has many advantages of exposition when the aim is to convey the reality and immediacy of life but the reader is frequently left to ponder how many of his sections fit into the explanation of the longer term development of capitalism, and how class and accumulation related to the spheres of exchange. Far too often examples are culled from many countries to support a discussion of similarities, but the essential differences between regions are obscured. This frequently makes for a weak analysis, and in the case of India the comparison with the sophistication of the Cambridge volume is painful. Indeed, in general one finds that when Braudel moves away from his core countries the pages become less useful and more anecdotal. For those whose main interest is Britain the level of knowledge will appear fragmentary, and often dated.

The main problem however, is the central position Braudel accords to exchange and markets. Important as the insights derived from this are, it has resulted in a downgrading of the qualities specific to different systems and in particular the development of production-based capitalism. The reliance on Mediterranean sources results in a marginalisation of crucial developments in the sphere of production and of agrarian life which must form the core of any work which embraces the rise of modern capitalism. Again there is a useful commentary on class, strongest for southern Europe, but weak on how varying classes utilised and protected their surpluses, and it is not clear how the more primitive levels of accumulation provided a basis for subsequent accumulation.

To do this would require a broader and more rigorous model to achieve the 'general economic history', 'typology' or 'grammar' he set out to write. These critical comments could be multiplied, for Braudel's previous volume, and the as yet untranslated third volume; this last is far too perfunctory on the development of industry and the newer types of surplus of the British Industrial Revolution. Of course Braudel includes too much scholarship to be ignored; one reads a work such as this not only to enrich one's knowledge of both the development of exchange relations in early modern Europe and the *Annales* school, but to widen one's intellectual horizons.

British historians have often viewed 'outside' historical work with some disdain, yet these two works show, in their very different ways, how unfortunate this insularity has been for the appreciation of history, and for the understanding of the evolution of a modern world humanity.

Richard Saville



WHAT IS TO BE DONE ABOUT THE FAMILY?
Edited by Lynne Segal
Penguin 1983 pbk £2.50
ISBN 0 14 006596 2

This book is one of the first in the Socialist Society's 'What is to be done about?' series, and it is good that the first two of these (the other is Elizabeth Wilson's *Violence against Women*) should both be on socialist feminist themes. The tone and pitch of the book are in some ways surprising for a series whose general format seems to promise rather forthright statements of philosophy or programme. This collection is more a set of reflections on 'where are we now?' than a forceful popularisation of positions. The authors situate themselves thoughtfully and sometimes personally at a recent moment in the development of the feminist Left, and explore its possibilities and contradictions. Since the moment is not a particularly hopeful one, either for feminists or the Left more generally, the book is able to convey a lasting commitment to thinking and living out the problems of the movement, but doesn't offer very confident answers to the questions it raises. The essays provide a synoptic review of a number of current debates, rather than advancing radically new approaches or perspectives. This has also been a dominant tone in the Socialist Society's wider discussions, and the book reflects both the strengths and limitations of this.

The first substantive chapter, by Lynne Segal, gives an evocative account of the 60s and the extraordinary silence or worse of the radical Left of those years on the position of women. Liberation, she points out, often really meant liberation for men, and could merely represent in a radical guise a macho celebration of competitive individualism. Her chapter argues both for the value of the oppositional and counter-cultural movements of the 60s, and for the recognition of social and dependency needs which were neglected until the feminist movement became active in response. She has a nice way with rhetorical questions, both her own and other people's, and her at times direct and conversational writing provides some of the best passages in the book.

Mica Nava contributes the next stage of a linked historical sketch in her review of feminist critiques of the family from the late 1960s. She describes the moralism and voluntarism of feminist politics, in regard first to child-rearing and the division of roles within the family, and then more recently in respect of sexual preferences, in a more critical way than is usual among feminists perhaps because she believes that the positive side of 'personal politics' has been sufficiently stressed. The review of theoretical debates which follows — on mothering, domestic labour, reproduction,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and patriarchy — will I think be found too condensed by many readers, and since some of these themes are taken up by later contributors it might have been better to give more space instead to her earlier argument.

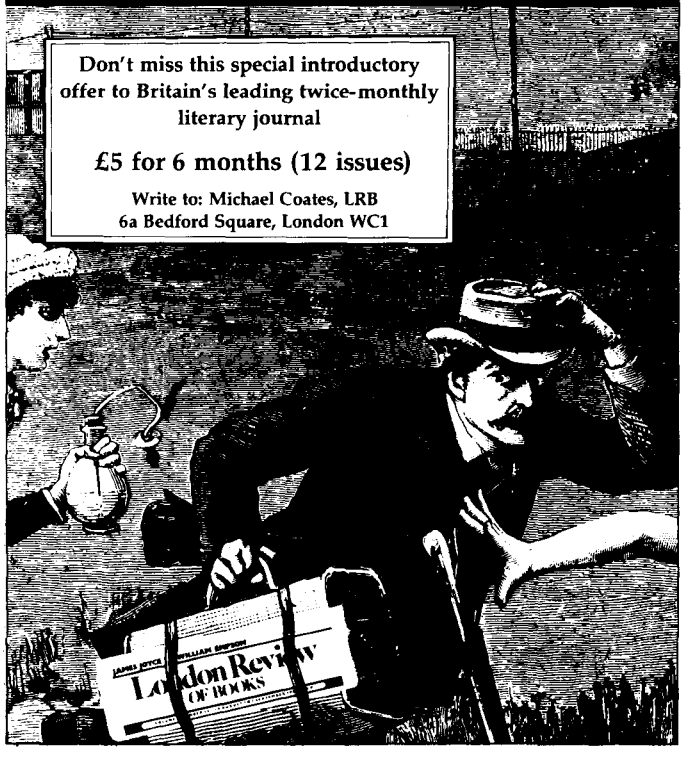
The following chapters of the book are each devoted to a major aspect of family politics. Sue Himmelweit writes about waged and unwaged work, Denise Riley about child care against the depressing background of declining welfare services, Beatrix Campbell about sex in and out of families, Wendy Clark about the experience of alternatives to families and their difficulties, and Fran Bennett about welfare and tax policies and their contradictions. Each of these chapters has something interesting to say, and readers should find them a thoughtful lead-in to these various areas of debate.

The authors find themselves caught between loyalty to a revolutionary socialist postulate that the family should be abolished, and their need, as feminists, to defend the claims of lasting relationship to others, tenderness and continuity that in part belong to the experience of families and which have been hard to fully replace outside them. A similar ambivalence is evident towards reformist, broadly 'social democratic' demands, for example for child benefit, day care, and domiciliary services, which some contributors now feel have received inadequate support as a result of the feminist movement's emphasis on consciousness and collective self-help. The difficulty with these reforms is that they seek to socialise some family functions, but often do so ideologically in the name of a more or less extended familial ideology. These and other contradictions leave the contributors in several minds. Even the Thatcherites' celebration of family values doesn't simply reconstitute a straightforward pro- and anti-family debate. As Lynne Segal makes clear in her conclusion, the New Right's family policy is most vulnerable in its hypocrisy, for the contradiction between the responsibilities it rhetorically assigns to families and the damage it is actually doing to their ability to meet them.

Perhaps the concept of family is just too catch-all and slippery to be of much use to socialists and feminists, even as a negative. We might do better to argue unequivocally for the importance of relationships in the development of people, and for judging these by criteria of respect, care and mutual pleasure rather than by external social conventions. Further, we should insist from knowledge and conviction on the complementarity between public and private forms of care in any society which aims to take personal development seriously. The argument here should be about a desirable and attainable quality of care, in whatever setting it is given. Despite the current political climate it seems to me that more progress has been made in raising hopes and expectations here than the authors recognise. And equality of rights for men and women may be better fought for directly, as a condition to be met both in and out of families, than as an argument against families as such. The value ascribed to the family has served many interests, but these have included at times the defence as well as the relative subordination of women, and the limitation as well as the reproduction of capitalism. A more considered politics of family than a simple demand for abolition is going to be needed in the next stage of socialist debate, and this book is a useful step towards it.

Michael Rustin

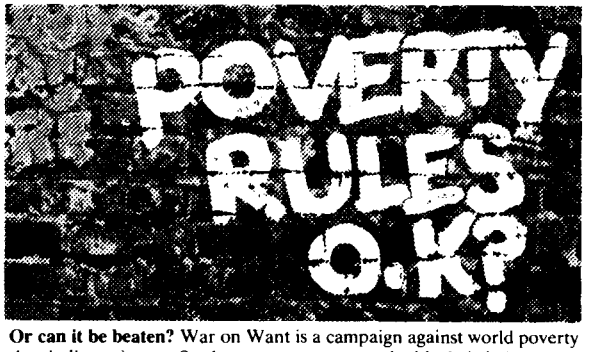
London Review OF BOOKS



Don't miss this special introductory offer to Britain's leading twice-monthly literary journal

£5 for 6 months (12 issues)

Write to: Michael Coates, LRB
6a Bedford Square, London WC1



Or can it be beaten? War on Want is a campaign against world poverty that believes it can. So do our supporters, and with their help we are taking practical steps to build a better future NOW in a world of unemployment, war, hunger and poverty:

The writing is on the wall for a world that ignores the poor. Join us and help create a better future, ACT NOW – make a regular donation through a bankers' order.

Return this form to Rm 65, War on Want, FREEPOST, 467 Caledonian Rd, London N7 9BE. We will forward it to your bank.
Please send project details for (tick)
☐ Central America ☐ Africa ☐ Asia ☐ U.K.

WAR ON WANT

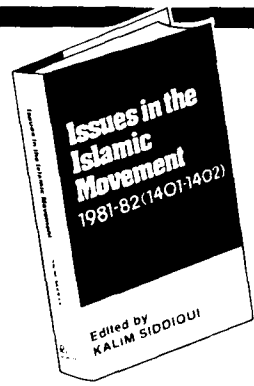
YOUR NAME .....
YOUR ADDRESS .....
TO ..... (YOUR BANK'S NAME)
AT .....
..... (BANK ADDRESS)
Please Pay War on Want £ ..... every month/year
starting on ..... 1982, until further notice
Signature .....
Account No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

FOR OFFICE USE: TO NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK, EALING BRANCH (60-07-10), A/C 18575765.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Issues in the Islamic Movement

1981-82 (1401-1402)



Edited by
KALIM SIDDIQUI

The second (1981-82) volume of this highly successful annual anthology of articles reflecting the worldview of Islam is now out. In his 12,000-word introduction the editor Dr Kalim Siddiqui begins the task of describing the 'multi-dimensional reality' of the Islamic movement. The aim, he says, is to put together, piece by piece, an analytical and operational model of the Islamic movement.

The result is perhaps the most exciting, inspiring and evocative prose on the Islamic movement, the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic State being written at the present time.

There are 104 articles, a glossary, and an extensive index; pp 403.

ISBN 0-905081-13-7 Hbk £13.95
ISBN 0-905081-14-5 Pbk £ 6.95

Order from any bookshop or from

THE OPEN PRESS LTD.
6 Endsleigh Street,
London WC1H 0DS

WORLD MARXIST REVIEW

World Marxist Review is a theoretical and information journal of Communist and Workers Parties.
Its Editorial Board represents parties in over 50 countries.

August issue includes

Banner of the Cuban Revolution. Contemplating the Lessons of Moncada.
Raul Castro Ruz (Cuba).

A Central Issue
Gordon McLennan (Great Britain)

. . . But What About Ireland?
Niall Farrell

The CIA Under Reagan
Terence Cannon

Single issues 50p (postage extra)
Subscription (one year) £7 for 12 issues, (including postage)

Apply to WMR, Central Books
14 The Leathermarket, London SE1 3ER

I enclose £7.00 for 1 year subscription to:
world marxist review

*Name*_____

*Address*_____

Post to CENTRAL BOOKS LTD.,
14 The Leather Market, London SE1 3ER

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TOO MUCH PESSIMISM

It is surprising that the July *Marxism Today* should publish as its major feature on the Tory election victory an article by Andrew Gamble which appears to be more social democratic than Marxist in its underlying approach. As far as one can tell from Gamble's ambiguous style, he is attempting to answer the question: 'How can Labour win the next General Election?' But the question which everyone on the Left should be concerned with is: 'How can we develop a popular movement which will defeat the Tories and secure the election of a Labour government committed to left policies?'

Along with this narrowly electoral approach, there is a complete absence from Gamble's argument of the concept of mass struggle with the aim of securing the removal of the Thatcher government. Hence his reference to 'another five years of hard Thatcher' and the statement that 'Labour appears to be doomed, incapable of ever governing again.'

Only such an electoral approach can explain Gamble's amazing suggestion that the Left and the Right in the Labour Party should patch up a deal in order to win an electoral victory. Even if an electoral victory was won on the basis of a compromise such as suggested by Gamble, given the present capitalist control of the state and the media, it would simply result in another Labour government repeating past mistakes and surrendering to big business. The end result would be a further erosion of support for Labour.

Another serious weakness is that Gamble is completely defeatist about the possibility of a left government tackling Britain's economic crisis through an alternative political and economic strategy. It is certainly true that as a result of Thatcher's policies a left government would have greater difficulty in rebuilding Britain's economy and that it would take many years to restore full employment. But to suggest as Gamble does that a left government would be totally at the mercy of world (he presumably means capitalist) economic forces is untrue and is harmfully defeatist.

Cyril Clayden, Bromley

WHICH WAY

The article by Bob Rowthorn and the trade unionists roundtable (September *Marxism Today*) were extremely welcome. They showed that sections of the Left are facing up to the harsh reality of the present situation. There is now a serious danger that Thatcherism will 'americanise' British politics by knocking out the organised working class, reformist, socialist party as its main rival. The demise of Labour as a governmental force would send us all back to the turn of the century.

Across the Left, two alternatives are on offer in this situation. The fundamentalists argue that nothing has really changed. The Left has the right policies and methods and if it campaigns without compromise the tide will inevitably turn. Whatever their differences, Trotskyists, Stalinists and the Tribunite 'hard left' unite on this basic position.

Fortunately others do not share this biblical faith but prefer to analyse the world as it is and formulate strategies that can move '10,000 one step forward', rather than 'you and one other 10 steps forward' (Jack Dromey). This realistic Left must assert itself in the coming months by presenting a viable short-term programme for the labour and democratic movement which can unify maximum opposition to Thatcherism and counter the empty rhetoric of the fundamentalists. The forthcoming Labour and Communist conferences will indicate where the majority want to go.

Jon Bloomfield, Birmingham

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Brenda Kirsch is a member of the GLC police committee support unit
Michael Ellman is professor of economics - University of Amsterdam.
Batara Simatupang is a research worker on the Polish economy at the University of Amsterdam.
Ann Sedley is the women's rights officer of the NCCL.
Eric Hobsbawm is the author of *The Forward March of Labour Halted?* and a member of the *Marxism Today* Editorial Board.
Tricia Davis is the co-ordinator of the Birmingham Trade Union Resource Centre and chairperson of the CP Midlands District Committee.
Alan Clarke works for S Yorks Council.
David Yip is an actor.
Dave Priscott is a member of the Communist Party EC and the *Marxism Today* Editorial Board.
Peter Golding is a research associate at the Centre for Mass Communication Research, Leicester University and co-author of *Images of Welfare*.
Graham Murdock is a research associate at the Centre for Mass Communication Research, Leicester University and author of *Televising Terrorism* (forthcoming).
Keith Waterhouse writes for the *Daily Mirror*.
Beatrix Campbell is a journalist at *City Limits*.
David Edgar is a playwright.
David Berry is a freelance journalist.
Steve Pinder is a journalist at *City Limits*.
Chris Bohn works for the *NME*.
Michael Rustin lectures at North East London Polytechnic and is a member of the Socialist Society Steering Committee.
Richard Saville lectures in economic history at St Andrew's University.
Erratum **Pat Healy's** name in the September issue was wrongly spelt.

Series of lectures at Marx House alternate Thursdays at 7.30 discussing the problems of regionalism and nationalism in Britain.

6 October	Socialism and Nationalism: an introduction	*Andrew Davies*
20 October	Ireland	*Chris Myant*
3 November	Scotland	*Jack Ashton*

Further information from the Librarian, 37a Clerkenwell Green, London EC1
Tel 01-253 1485

UNA International Service
SITUATIONS VACANT in the THIRD WORLD

For skilled and experienced people in French, Portuguese and Arabic speaking countries:

Mali; 2 Hygienist/Sanitation workers; Survey Coordinator; Radio Programmer; Radio Maintenance Technician. **Upper Volta;** Agriculturalist. **Cape Verde;** Physiotherapist. **Brazil;** Midwives for the Amazon; Audiovisual Specialist. **West Bank;** Social Statistician; Computer Programmer; Occupational Therapist; Medical Laboratory Technician, Kindergarten Advisor.

All posts for two years min, with basic living allowances, return air fares, language classes etc. Details and application forms from UNAIS, 3, Whitehall Court, London SW1 (01-930 0679)

UNAIS is part of the work of the UNA trust
Registered Charity Number 256236

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Update

NEWS

Londonwide Emergency Legal Service. Funded by the GLC and the ELS Research and Development Project this service aims to operate outside of office hours and at weekends. It will provide advice and assistance on a wide range of legal emergencies, arrests, illegal evictions, domestic violence, immigration emergencies etc. Based at 4 Dock St London E1. Information available from Maxine Petinaud and Dave Perry.

Royal Shakespeare Company 'comes to town'. Sheila Hancock leads an 18 strong group of actors and musicians in a pioneering touring venture. This will bring RSC productions to 22 towns and villages where there is little regular professional theatre. In addition to *A Midsummer Nights Dream* directed by Sheila Hancock, and *Romeo and Juliet* directed by John Card, Edward Bond's play *Derek* directed by Sara Pia Anderson will be staged in morning performances for parents with children. The tour begins in October: Lincoln 10-15, Mansfield 17-20, Walsall 21-25, Bridgnorth 26-29, Barnsley 31-3 Nov. Further details available from Carol Braithwaite 01-628 3351.

Student Left Alliance 24 hour 'hotline'. Open from 3-7 October for new students wanting to find out about the student left or to be put in contact with a local group. Tel 01-651 4631.

Stuart Hall on Karl Marx. On 15 and 22 Oct at 8.00pm Channel Four transmits a two-part documentary written and narrated by Stuart Hall which outlines a brief history of Marxist ideas, examines the development of Marxism in the revolutions of the USSR, Eastern Europe and the Third World and explores the relevance of Marxism in contemporary Western Europe.

CAMPAIGN

National Campaign Against the Police Bill. A wide range of black, community and political groups backed by the GLC have begun a campaign against the new Police Bill. A series of events are planned to draw attention to the new powers this will give the police and the dangers to civil liberties. Information available from National Campaign against the Police Bill 50 Rectory Rd London N16 (01-249 8334).

National Campaign against the Berufsverbot. Gerhard Von Schnehen is a recent victim of the West German Berufsverbot system. He will be touring Britain from 25 Oct to 3 Nov and speaking at Reading Oct 26, Bradford University 27, Liverpool 28, Scotland 31-1 Nov, House of Commons 2 Nov and Cardiff 3 Nov. Further information from Jack Tyrrell 01-560 8758.

Overseas Nurses singled out for attack. Overseas nurses in Newham and some other Area Health Authorities are being denied the opportunity to consolidate their training and face unemployment on qualifying. The Malaysian Nurses Society in the United Kingdom are campaigning for a minimum period of 6 months qualifying experience for all overseas nurses. Further information from MNSUK at Malaysia Hall 46 Bryanston Square London W1H 8AJ.

DEMONSTRATIONS

CND Demonstration, 22 Oct. No Cruise, No Trident, Freeze the Arms Race, Nuclear Weapons are no

Defence are the major themes of this demonstration to coincide with a worldwide week of actions by the peace movement. Assemble at Victoria Embankment London from 11.00. Tel 01-263 0977 for details of coaches etc.

Support Namibia March and Rally. 29 October London. Part of an international week of action, supported by United Nations, to draw attention to the liberation struggle in Namibia and the illegal occupation by S Africa, organised by Anti Apartheid and the Namibia Support Committee. Details of countrywide meetings and other events from Claire 01-267 1941 or AA 01 387 7966.

EVENTS

Political Postcard and Poster Fair. 7-8 October. An exhibition to publicise the work of the variety of collectives and individuals publishing political postcards. To be held at the Africa Centre 38 King St London WC2. Friday 10-5. Saturday 10-6.

Women For Life on Earth. 15 Oct. Evening event (see confs) featuring two women's jazz bands, High Jinks and the Danish band Superkarla. At the Ace, Brixton 8.00pm.

Peace Day on the South Bank 22 Oct. A celebration of peace, a mixed programme of music, poetry and prose 11-6 at Jubilee Gardens. Evening concert with Superkarla — Danish women's Jazz Band and Stable Singers — an American Black Band. At the Ace Brixton 8.00pm. Full details from 01-633 5557.

CND Benefit Concert. 22 Oct. Sponsored by Musicians Against Nuclear Arms. Cello soloist Raphael Wallfisch plays Arnold, Hayden, Handel, Strauss, Mozart, 7.30pm. St Martin in the Fields Church, Trafalgar Sq. Admission £2.50, gallery £2.00, (unwaged £1.50).

Support Namibia 29 Oct. An evening benefit organised by Namibia Support Committee and Anti Apartheid. To be held at Islington Town Hall. Further information from Claire 01-267 1941 or AA 01-387 7966.

TUC Women's Day of Action 29 Oct. Events to be organised on a regional and local basis. Posters, leaflets and badges available from Ann Eibson TUC Congress House London WC1.

CONFERENCES

London's Transport 8 Oct. Conference at County Hall organised by the GLC to discuss the implications of the Government's White Paper on London Transport. Transport pressure groups and other organisations interested in saving public transport welcome. Contact Roger Budden 01-633 5485.

Community Newspapers National Forum 8-9 October. A workshop based weekend for those involved in community newspapers. Topics include News, Libel, Distribution, Sexism. Held in Brighton. Full details from Brighton Voice, Box 12, 20 Cowper St Hove Sussex

Women for Life on Earth. 15-16 October. A workshop based conference aimed at making the connections between ecological and feminist issues. To be held at County Hall, London. Sat women and men welcome, Sun women only. Creche available. Day session £1.50 (75p unwaged). Full details from Liz Butterworth, Mandala, Bermuda Lodge, Lambseth Eye, Suffolk IP23 7AG or 01-673 4814.

1984 Just Around the Corner. 15 Oct Left Alliance Student Conference at Manchester University Students Union. Main themes include YTS, the peace movement and the Police Bill. 16 Oct Left Alliance Women's Conference, women only. Registration 10.30am. Day session £1.00. Pooled fare. Accommodation available. Full details from 01-651 4631.

Communist Strategies in the 1930s and 1940s 16 Oct. Day school organised by Merseyside CP at 39 Shore St, Liverpool 6. 11-4.00pm. Refreshments available. Full details 051 207 0280.

Women and Employment. 19 Oct GLC Women's Committee Open Meeting to seek women's views on aspects of employment in London. 7.00 at County Hall. Full details from 01-633 1113.

PUBLICATIONS

Amending Equality Laws. A booklet published by the National Council for Civil Liberties which puts forward proposals to help groups make demands and points out the loopholes in current legislation. For further information contact 01-403 3888.

Non-Nuclear Defence for Britain. This booklet is a transcript of a talk given by Dan Smith. Published by Birmingham Labour CND it is available from Joyce Murray 28 Blackford Rd Birmingham 11. Price 30p.

Trade Unionism: A Strategy for the 80s. This is the text of a speech delivered by Tony Benn for The George Woodcock Memorial Lecture in March at Leicester University. Published by the Institute for Workers Control and available from them at Bertrand Russell House, Gamble St, Nottingham NG7 4ET. Price 30p.

Entries for the November update should be sent as soon as possible (latest date Friday 7 October) to Maria Loftus, Marxism Today 16 St John London EC1 or tel 01-251 4406 or 01-607 3344 (evenings).

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AIR AND FERRY TICKETS ISSUED IMMEDIATELY. ALL PACKAGE HOLIDAYS

WORLD WIDE TRAVEL IN '83

All Brochure Holidays

Please note that all operators skiing, cruise and package holidays can be booked promptly and efficiently with the help of our new computerised system. Please call in or phone Adolfo Lopez for any details or brochures you require.

The far horizon and South America

Cuba and South America

Weekly departures via Madrid to Cuba. Varied tours in first class hotels combined with stay in Havana. Other packages to Mexico, Peru and South America.
Specialist tour for independent film makers to Havana Film Festival, December. New low cost tours combining Jibacoa beach centre near Havana with social visits and optional tours of the island, from £525.

Trans-Siberia to China and Japan

Independent or group travel via Moscow and trans-Siberian rail or air routes to Mongolia, Beijing or Tokyo, returning via Hong Kong or continuing to Australia or the US West Coast. From £265 one way to Beijing.

City breaks

City holidays

Regular one week and weekend holidays in Moscow and Leningrad, Budapest and Prague from £175 inc. Wide range of other Western European city visits — £101 by air.
Long weekend in Paris. Weekly flights departing Friday 7pm returning 7.20 am Tuesday. 3 nights in Paris from £55. Cost according to accommodation required.

Specialist travel

We specialise in tailor made group study tours and holidays with a purpose,particularly to the USSR and Eastern Europe, Algeria, France and Italy. Phone or write to Bénédicte Brouard or Landon Temple for details.

Russian language courses in USSR

Moscow autumn course 11 November- 9 December. Full board and extensive programme of social and cultural visits in addition to the daily language tuition and reading facilities at the Lenin library.
1984 Russian language programme again includes courses of 3-12 weeks duration in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Novosibirsk, Piatygorsk and Kharkov which may be combined to provide a study period of up to six months in the Soviet Union between April and September.

Trade Union and professional tours

Tailor made programmes for groups to USSR, Europe and North Africa in association with all fellow members of the International Social Tourism Committee. Special low rates for groups — minimum of seven people on most flights.

Algeria

Group and individual travel to Algiers and the coastal region, to the artistic and cultural centres of Tlemcen and Ghardaia, and to the oasis towns of the Hoggar and Tassili (winter and spring only).

STOP PRESS

Havana Film Festival

Specialist tour for film workers and film buffs for the festival 9-17 December plus additional days in Havana and a short tour of the islands — 2 weeks overall. Details on request.

Algeria for Christmas and New Year

22 December—1 January, including Oran, Tlemcen, Laghouat, Ghardaia and Algiers. By air to Algiers, and coach within the country. £300 fully inclusive.

November celebrations in USSR

Choice of three one week tours between 1-11 November to celebrate the anniversary of the Soviet revolution in Moscow and Leningrad — includes holiday parade and daily programme of visits and excursions. From £210 full board.

Specialist tour operator to the labour and student movements

Progressive Tours Ltd

12 Porchester Place, Marble Arch, London W2 2BS
Telephone 01-262 1676. Telex 25135.

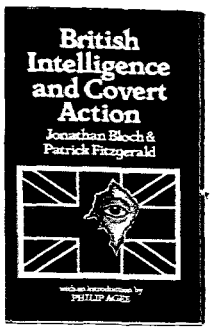
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

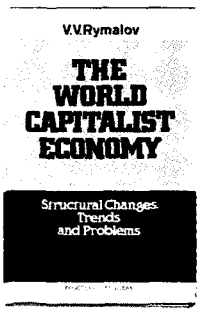
CENTRAL★BOOKS

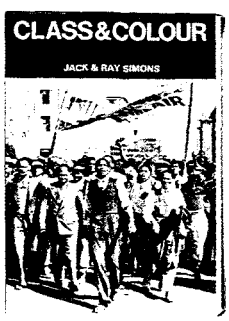
37 Grays Inn Road, London WC1 • 01-242 6166

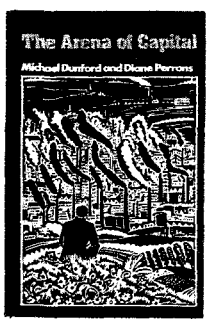
Open Monday-Friday 9.30 to 5.30. Saturday 10.00 till 2.00

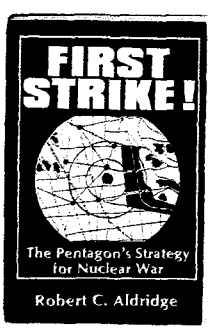
1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15

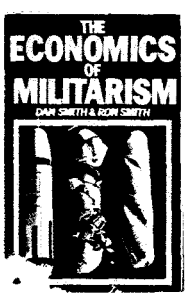


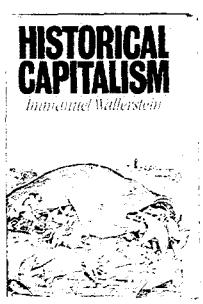


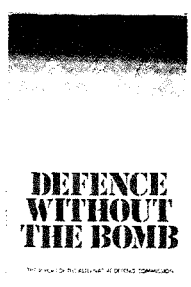












NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

_____

_____

PHONE _____

Postage: Add 40p per title. ALL ORDERS OF £10 AND OVER ARE POST FREE.

Please make cheques and postal orders payable to Central Books.

I ENCLOSE: £ _____

Return to:
Central Books,
37 Grays Inn Road,
London WC1

1
BRITISH INTELLIGENCE AND COVERT ACTION
Jonathan Bloch & Patrick Fitzgerald
Paper £5.95

2
THE YELLOW DEVIL
Gold and Capitalism A. Anikin
Cloth £4.50

3
THE POLITICS OF THATCHERISM
Edited by Stuart Hall & Martin Jacques Paper £4.95

4
THE WORLD CAPITALIST ECONOMY
Structural Changes, Trends and Problems V.V. Rymalov Cloth £4.95

5
ZIMBABWE: A REVOLUTION THAT LOST ITS WAY?
Andre Astrow Paper £5.95

6
CLASS AND COLOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA 1850-1950
Jack & Ray Simons
Paper £5.00

7
CHILE: THE PINOCHET DECADE
The Rise and Fall of the Chicago Boys Latin American Bureau Paper £2.95

8
VICTOR: AN UNFINISHED SONG
Joan Jara Paper £4.95

9
THE ARENA OF CAPITAL
Michael Dunford & Diane Perrons Paper £8.95

10
HOOLIGAN: A HISTORY OF RESPECTABLE FEARS
Geoffrey Pearson Paper £5.95

11
FIRST STRIKE
The Pentagon's Strategy for Nuclear War Robert C. Aldridge
Paper £5.95

12
THE ECONOMICS OF MILITARISM
Dan Smith & Ron Smith
Paper £2.95

13
HISTORICAL CAPITALISM
Immanuel Wallerstein
Paper £3.95

14
DEFENCE WITHOUT THE BOMB
Report of Alternative Defence Commission Paper £4.45

15
THE CITY OF CAPITAL
Gerry Coakley & Lawrence Harris
Paper £6.50

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED